HENRY

AND

ROSAMOND.

A

TRAGEDY.

Dedicated to

Sir *John Philipps*, Bart.

By *WILLIAM HAWKINS*, M.A.
And Fellow of *Pembroke-College* in OXFORD.

Omne animi vitium tanto conſpectius in ſe
Crimen habet, quanto major qui peccat habetur.
JUVEN.

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TO

Sir *John Philipps*, Bart.

SIR,

AS the following Play comes into the World under ſome Diſadvantage, I am happy in your Permiſſion to ſhelter it under your Name.

BUT though it did not ſtand in need of your Favour and Patronage upon many Accounts; yet it ſhould be remembred, that, in point of Propriety, you have an undoubted Right to theſe Sheets, whether you are conſidered as a Perſon ſincerely attached to the Univerſity of *Oxford*, or particularly in-

tereſting yourſelf in the Welfare of *Pembroke-College*; to the Regard and Affection of which Society you have a double Claim, both as an Ornament, and a Benefactor.

THE common Topics of Panegyric are obvious; and I have here a fair and agreeable Opportunity of taking Notice of thoſe many amiable Qualities, which adorn you in public and private Life, and for which you are ſo juſtly beloved and eſteemed: But my Inclination is corrected by a ſeaſonable Thought, that moſt Writers of the preſent Age have, in this reſpect, a particular Advantage over me, as it is infinitely more eaſy to make a Character, than to deſcribe one.

BESIDES, it would be needleſs to enter into a Detail of thoſe Praiſes, which are already in the Mouth of every Well-wiſher to his Country: But I cannot reſiſt the Impulſe of Gratitude, which points to that Part of your Character, which more immediately affects me; your

your Good-nature and Condeſcenſion, to which I am indebted for the Honour of your Acquaintance and Friendſhip, and for your favourable Acceptance of the following Poem.

GIVE me Leave to aſſure you, Sir, that if I am anxious for the Fate of this Tragedy, one principal Motive for it, is, the amuſing Hope of tranſmitting to Poſterity a Monument of the Regard and Veneration I have for the Perſon and Character of Sir JOHN PHILIPPS. I am,

SIR,

Your much obliged,

And moſt humble Servant,

Pemb. Coll. *Oxon.*
March 13, 1749.

WILLIAM HAWKINS.

ADVERTISEMENT.

THIS TRAGEDY having been offered to the Managers of *Drury-Lane* Theatre, who declined accepting it, for Reaſons which appeared to the Author to be rather evaſive, than ſatisfactory, he thinks proper to ſubmit it to the Judgment of the Public: And as he is not conſcious of having had the leaſt Intention to give Offence, and no particular Paſſage has been excepted againſt, he begs no other Prepoſſeſſions in its Favour, on this Account, than the reaſonable Allowances of a candid and impartial Diſpoſition. The Play has indeed received ſome conſiderable Alterations ſince it came from Mr. *Garrick*'s Hands: But, as theſe Alterations have no manner of Connexion with what the Author preſumes was the principal Objection to the Whole (for, having had no clear Intimation, he can only ſpeak by Conjecture), he does not think himſelf obliged to explain himſelf further on that Head.

Drama-

Dramatis Perſonæ.

MEN.

King HENRY *the Second.*
Prince HENRY.
Duke of CORNWALL.
Earl of SALISBURY.
Lord CLIFFORD.
Earl of LEICESTER.
Earl of WINCHESTER.
Earl of SURRY.

WOMEN.

Queen ELINOR.
ROSAMOND.
HARRIANA.

Guards and Attendants.

SCENE *in and near* CANTERBURY.

HENRY AND ROSAMOND.

ACT I.

SCENE I.

Enter the Earl of LEICESTER.

LEICESTER.

IF there is that ſome call Eternal Juſtice——
Let not the coward Thought perplex my Soul:
My Boſom entertains Two lordly Gueſts,
Strong-plum'd Ambition, and Hell-gender'd Luſt:
The Voice of Conſcience, 'gainſt their wild Domain
Is but a Whiſper to the Whirlwind's Blaſt.
HENRY PLANTAGENET has balk'd my Hopes;
I ſtand the Outcaſt of his Peeviſhneſs,
And diſappointed Rival of his Love!

But I have deeply laid my Plan of Vengeance:
I have been long young HARRY's Oracle;
His ſhallow Friends walk in my Leading-ſtrings:
If Fate give him the Crown, I'll bear the Rule,
And thro' the Gate of Pow'r ſhall find Acceſs
To Love, and ROSAMOND. But ſee Lord SURRY.

Enter Earl of SURRY.

SURRY.

My Lord of LEICESTER, haſt thou ſeen the Prince?

LEICESTER.

No. What of him?

SURRY.

O he is ſeeking thee:
Thou haſt faſt wedg'd thyſelf within his Heart;
He calls thee valiant, faithful, juſt, and good:
His greedy Ear devours thy Eloquence.
He now demeans himſelf as we could wiſh;
Talks of high Fame, and hardy Feats of Arms:
Thou haſt inſpir'd his Soul. He ſwears, the Crown,
Whoſe Glories fade on HENRY's wither'd Head,
Would better flouriſh on his youthful Brow:
In troth he is a mettled Youth, my Lord,
And Nature meant him well.

LEICESTER.

Ay, or how elſe
Could we have taught him his own Worth, or ours;
Or hope to raiſe our Honours from the Duſt?
Faint Hearts will call this Treaſon; but, my Lord,
'Tis injur'd Merit's Cauſe; and we will work
To turn the Current of our low-ebb'd Fortunes
Into a fuller Channel: But he comes,
And I have joyful Tidings for his Ear.

Enter Prince HENRY, *and Earl of* WINCHESTER.

P. HENRY.

Well, our good Friend, and truſty Counſellor,
What from our Uncle SCOTLAND?

LEI-

LEICESTER.

This, my Liege:
In Princely Terms he greets your Royal Highneſs,
And well approves th' Alliance you have offer'd:
But Words, ſo pleaſe your Grace, in forc'd Extent,
Are but the Texture of fine Rhetoric;
Plain Action is Sincerity's beſt Proof:
He has encamp'd his Troops on *Engliſh* Ground,
A peerleſs Force of Twenty thouſand ſtrong.
The Earl of *Cheſter*, with your Father's Powers,
Is in full March to meet him.

P. HENRY.

Say, my Lord,
On what Pretence makes he this Armament?
For we muſt wait the Iſſue of a Battle,
Before we can avow ourſelf his Friend.

LEICESTER.

His Claim's diſtinct from yours. He does demand
Full Reſtitution of the frontier Towns,
Your Father wreſted from him in the Wars:
And thus he ſeems no Party in our Cauſe,
While we, as Time ſhall ſerve, may back his Quarrel.

P. HENRY.

Why theſe are noble Tidings, and well ſuit
Our Royal Purpoſe. This looks well, my Lords:
I will no longer bend me to the Brow
Of this old King, my Father. LEICESTER, SURRY,
WINCHESTER, Friends, Companions of my Fortunes,
Give me your Hands, your Hearts, and, truſt me, Lords,
We bravely ſhall outface theſe perilous Times,
Aſſiſted by your Loves.

SURRY.

My haſty Will
Is on the Wing, mocking Ability,
And Zeal outſtrips Performance.

WINCHESTER.

And ſo, in Honeſty of Heart, ſays WINCHESTER.

P. HENRY.

Thanks to you both: But, my good Lord of LEICESTER,
Are theſe ſame *Scots*, our new-contracted Friends,
Such as our Honour may lean ſafe upon?

LEICESTER.

Better ne'er mounted Glory's ſteep Aſcent.
Sir, they are bold as the firſt Sons of Nature,
Ere Pomp and Luxury debauch'd the World:
Bred in a Land of Poverty and Want,
They live by free, uncultivated Virtue:
Eaſe were unnatural to their Iron Hearts;
For Labour is the Buſineſs of their Lives:
And, when they're ſummon'd forth to ſerve their Prince,
Dreadful they march, embody'd in the Field,
As the fell Storm, or Death-diſperſing Bolt,
That ruſhes on, and levels all before it.

P. HENRY.

'Tis good, and henceforth will we mould our Perſon
Into the Attitude of Majeſty.

WINCHESTER.

It fits your Highneſs well.

P. HENRY.

Thou haſt ſeen me, LEICESTER, in the Bloom of Youth,
Amidſt the Joys of a voluptuous Court,
Where Folly ſpread her ſilken Net before me:
There ſoft'ning Beauty breath'd the am'rous Sigh;
There melting Muſic tun'd her Syren Voice,
And the high-flowing Bowl foam'd with rich Wines,
Soliciting ev'n Abſtinence to taſte:
Let me not turn my gallant Thought that Way,
When Virtue's balanc'd on ſo nice a Poiſe,
One Breath of Inclination turns the Scale.
Farewel for ever Pleaſure's nerveleſs Tribe,
Welcome the manly Pomp of crimſon War,
The Heaven-ſcaling Noiſe of charging Foes,
The piercing Groans of Bravery laid in Duſt,
And all the Dangers, all the Sweets of Glory.

LEICESTER.

Spoke like a Candidate for this World's Empire.
Old HARRY's foremoſt Boaſt is only this,
That he is Father to a Prince like you.

P. HENRY.

Go to; he's weak, he's weak, and peeviſh, LEICESTER,
And yet 'tis current Converſation here,
That he hath well acquitted him in *France*
To martial Chivalry.

SURRY.

True it is, my Liege,
In open Field, he'as twice o'erthrown their Powers,
And now returns——

LEICESTER.

——Ay, like a Fugitive,
Rather than Conqueror; the doting Hero
Comes whining like an Infant for his Toy:
O he is worſe than diſtaff'd *Hercules!*
Where is the Honour of your *Saxon* Houſe,
If Harlots make a Tool of Majeſty?
Fame ſhall record HARRY ſucceeded ROSAMOND,
Not HARRY HARRY.

P. HENRY.

By the immortal Name
Of my great Anceſtors it is too much——

LEICESTER.

O give that noble Indignation Room!
Have you not Friends, and Juſtice on your Side?
Did we not all ſwear Fealty to your Highneſs,
Conven'd in full Aſſembly by your Father?
Or was it but a Shew of Majeſty,
A ſolemn Farce of State for Boys to ſhout at?

P. HENRY.

Hold there—For ev'ry Word thy Love has utter'd,
Rebukes my tardy Soul—O 'tis moſt true,
As ſpiritleſs, and dull-temper'd as I ſeem,
This Head has born fair *England*'s Diadem:
You all remember 'twas at *Wincheſter*,

In Preſence of the States of the whole Realm,
The Royal Grant was made; when on this Brow
Reſted th' Imperial Crown, which ſhould confer
High Dignity, and Share of ſov'reign Sway:
It was the free Donation of our Father.

LEICESTER.

HENRY has ſure forgotten him of late:
For then your Royal Highneſs may remember,
He well diſcharg'd an Office that became him.

P. HENRY.

Ay, thou doſt well remind me of it, LEICESTER;
'Twas at the ſumptuous Banquet then prepar'd,
I ſat inthron'd, the foremoſt of the Feaſt,
Lord of that glorious Day: 'Twas then my Father
Stept forth obſequious, like a Vaſſal-Prince,
Tending my Kingly Board; and ſure, he cry'd,
No Monarch e'er was ſerv'd ſo honourably.
I whiſper'd in his Ear his Grace of *York*,
That, born a Prince, I thought me not much honour'd
By this ſame Miniſtry of that Duke's Son.
My Father was no better.

LEICESTER.

Nor is now,
But in our fooliſh Fears. Was that ſame Crown
You juſt now ſpoke of but a *May-day* Garland,
Beſtow'd as on an Idiot, in mere Paſtime?
Unnat'ral Inſult! By the Blood that's in you,
If you have Hand, or Heart, or Sword, revenge,
Revenge yourſelf, your Country, and your Friends;
Your Friends for you diſhonour'd, ſlighted, ſcorn'd;
Your Country ſoften'd by effeminate Rule;
Yourſelf the ſtalking Shadow of a King.

P. HENRY.

Enough, my tow'ring Fancy graſps the Skies:
Hence, give the Word to Fate; gird on my Sword:
Thou faithful Guardian of my wav'ring Youth,
I'll go where thou and Honour point the Way.
Where are theſe truſty *Scots?* Quick let us join them;

I will

I will unfold my Banner to the Sun,
And pour my Vengeance on this Parent-Foe.

LEICESTER.

Well ſaid; but I muſt cool this burning Vein,
Or this mad Youth will hurry us to Ruin. [*Aſide.*
I meant not this: I pray your Grace be calm.

P. HENRY.

Yes, as the Sea, that quarrels with the Wind!
Who is't can tame the hungry Panther's Rage?
Glory has ſtill an Appetite more keen:
HARRY contends not for a vulgar Prize;
It is a Crown: Repeat it to the Heavens,
With the big Mouth of War; It is a Crown:
O you ſhould ruſh like Lightning from my Preſence,
And boldly pluck it from the Tyrant's Brow.

LEICESTER.

Your Highneſs knows our Hearts and Duty yours:
But Zeal thus premature were worſe than Treaſon:
Our growing Cauſe is yet too young, to combat
With this tempeſtuous Time: If Fortune bleſs
Our good Allies with Victory, the Crown
Is yours by Cov'nant, and your Right proclaim'd
By *Scotland*'s King: Till when lie we in ſecret,
Like the unſeen inſinuating Flame,
That creeps while it deſtroys: Without this Caution,
We are not ſafe an Hour——Your Father comes,
And you're withdrawn from Court--Hah! how ſounds [that?

P. HENRY.

As I love Honour, I do fear him not.

LEICESTER.

No—But the leſs Suſpicion's baleful Blaſt
Breathes on our Counſel, it takes Root the deeper.

P. HENRY.

What wouldſt thou urge me to?

LEICESTER.

Come, come, my Lord,
You muſt yourſelf to Court to meet the King;
And, when he queſtions you of your Departure,

Be you not too ſubmiſſive, nor too high:
We can find Reaſons plauſible enough
Beſides this Diſaffection—as—d'ye mark—
The Treatment of your Mother—the foul Scandal
Of a licentious Palace—and the like;
All Provocations groſs: And, Sir, of this
You ſhall be more advis'd anon.

P. HENRY.

Say'ſt ſo?
I thank thy Penetration——I was hot,
But thou art wiſe and brave. This Craft ſhall proſper;
The ſtaunchest Hound of State, that ever trac'd
The wily Doublings of Conſpiracy,
In this ſame Chace ſhall loſe his baffled Scent,
And yelp his balk'd Sagacity in Air.

LEICESTER.

May Fortune ſay, Amen.

P. HENRY.

My Lord of LEICESTER,
We muſt diſpatch ſome freſh Inſtructions ſtrait
For *Scotland*'s King; then for the Court away;
We will purſue this Buſineſs, come what may.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.

Enter the Earl of SALISBURY *and Lord* CLIFFORD.

SALISBURY.

Yet hold, good CLIFFORD.

CLIFFORD.

'Tis an old Man's Weakneſs:
Was it not I that train'd him up to War,
That taught his feeble Arm to graſp the Sword,
And pointed out the Paths that lead to Glory?
Was it for this he robb'd me of my Daughter?

SALIS-

SALISBURY.

Forget it, learn to ſcorn this Royal Robber,
And be at Peace.

CLIFFORD.

It is impoſſible.
Had he reduc'd me to the Beggar's Lot,
Or ſtript me of the Honours of my Race,
I could have ſmil'd at his Ingratitude:
But to deprive me of my greateſt Hopes,
To ſteal away my choiceſt, ſweeteſt Flower,
To tempt young Innocence with helliſh Arts—
'Tis more than Pain—it is—what is it not?—
O 'tis too much for an old Man to bear.
But canſt aſſure me he returns ſo ſoon?

SALISBURY.

Each Morn expects to ſee him crown'd with Laurels,
And rich with Spoils: Fortune ſtill takes his Part:
Where-e'er he marches, pale-fac'd Terror ſtalks
With Giant Strides, and leads his Van of Battle.

CLIFFORD.

Let me do Juſtice to the Man has wrong'd me:
My Lord of SALISBURY, from his Dawn of Youth,
I trac'd the Symptoms of an active Soul,
Suited for warlike Deeds and brave Atchievements:
But then his turbulent Paſſions work ſo ſtrong,
His Character is ever an Extreme;
A Hero, or a Dotard in Exceſs;
This Day, with a deep Senſe of Honour ſtung,
Half-Convert to fair Virtue; and the next,
Born by fierce Appetite, a Slave to Vice.

SALISBURY.

His gen'rous Temper one Day may prevail;
For Fate ſtill throws Occaſion in his Way,
To put his noble Qualities to Proof:
An unexpected Tempeſt from the North
Hangs low'ring o'er his Head; and the young Prince,
Who breathes a mighty and right Royal Spirit,
Has with ſome noble Followers left the Court.

CLIF-

CLIFFORD.

He is enſnar'd by guileful LEICESTER's Art:
The King, thou know'ſt, hath baniſh'd him his Preſence,
He meditates Revenge in all its Venom;
And ſince aroſe the League 'twixt him and HARRY.

SALISBURY.

Report has ſaid this Lord, on Terms of Honour,
Woo'd your fair Daughter's Love.

CLIFFORD.

He did profeſs ſo;
But much I fear me with a vile Deſign;
And for full Satisfaction, but this Day
I've penn'd a Note, in female Characters,
As from my Daughter, full of Blandiſhments,
And cordial Invitations from her Love:
If I ſurpriſe him at the Place aſſign'd,
I ſhall detect his Baſeneſs to his Face.
Perhaps I but tranſcribe the Sentiments
Of her abandon'd Heart—that as it may.

SALISBURY.

Think not too meanly of thy beauteous Daughter;
HENRY 'tis true engroſſes all her Soul,
Yet in her lonely, ſolitary Hours,
Sad, ſhe regrets her ruin'd Innocence,
And mourns, like the firſt Fair, her fallen State.

CLIFFORD.

'Tis ſuperficial Grief: a barren Soil
Where Reformation never can take Root:
O, that an only Child ſhould be a Curſe!
But let us hence, the Thought encroaches on me,
In Pity to myſelf I would divert it.
Couſin, this Way, I have yet more to tell you,
Of what my Soul is purpos'd tow'rd the King.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE

SCENE III.

Enter ROSAMOND *and* HARRIANA.

HARRIANA.

This Coolneſs is untimely.

ROSAMOND.

HARRIANA, [me:
Th' unpleaſing Thought will ſometimes ſteal upon
Great as they ſeem, all theſe are dear-bought Pleaſures:
Ev'n HENRY's Love has coſt me many a Pang.
Peace is the glorious Privilege of Virtue.
The harmleſs Country Maid, that lives retir'd,
Beneath the Covert of a homely Hut,
And knows no View beyond her daily Bread,
Has more Heart's Eaſe than I.

HARRIANA.

Prepoſt'rous Melancholy!
Is not the World, and its firſt Maſter, yours?
Nature, thy Handmaid, ſtill ſupplies thy Wiſhes,
Laviſh of all her Stock, as who ſhould ſay,
Thou ſhalt be happy.

ROSAMOND.

Theſe are mean Suggeſtions:
Know I ne'er ſold my Virtue, but to Love:
The maſſy Store of the Wealth-pregnant Earth,
The Pomp, and Eye-attracting Blaze of Courts,
And all the gilded Baits of Female Pride,
Were Bribes my HENRY's Love diſdain'd to offer:
Such as it is, this Beauty won his Heart,
How he won mine—I know not—but he won it—
For him I threw away my Innocence,
And am the Scoff of every ſcornful Tongue:
For him I've ſtain'd the noble Name of CLIFFORD,

And pierc'd his aged Soul who gave me Being;
For him, e'en now, my Heart with Tranſport beats;
His Preſence ever calms my troubled Breaſt,
Stills each dull Thought, and bids all Sorrow vaniſh.

HARRIANA.

Once more he comes victorious from the Field:
O meet him with thy Love's ſincereſt Welcome.

ROSAMOND.

Yes, he returns, and Thought adieu for ever:
Hence, I defy that Tyrant of the Mind:
My Love wants not a Plea: HENRY my Lord
Is great and gen'rous: He's the Pride of Fame,
And Fortune's Darling: HENRY lulls my Soul
In ſoft unfelt Captivity.

HARRIANA.

But hark,
Yon Trumpet's Voice proclaims him near at hand.

ROSAMOND.

O ſweeteſt Muſic to my raviſh'd Ear:
Now ev'ry thing begins to ſmile about me;
Bright ſeems the Seaſon as the new-born Spring,
When every Flower put forth its earlieſt Fragrance,
And infant Nature breath'd her Sweets around.

HARRIANA.

'Tis now thou riſeſt to thy proper Self;
Thy Charms are ſummon'd all, thy Graces dawn,
And ev'ry ſparkling Beauty beams anew.
But lo, the Royal Hero——I retire.

[*Exit* HARRIANA.

Enter King HENRY.

K. HENRY.

Take me once more, my Love, into thy Arms;
Thus let me claſp thee to my faithful Breaſt,
Thus feed my Eyes upon thy glowing Beauties,
And pour my Soul in Tranſports out before thee.
What, what is Fame, or Victory, to this?
Adieu the Pomp and Pageantry of War,
And Love reſume the Empire of my Soul.

ROSA-

ROSAMOND.

Speak not my Eyes the Language of my Heart?
Or ſhall I open my rich Hoard of Fondneſs,
With all the ſoft Impertinence of Love?
Why has my Lord ſo long been abſent from me?
Methinks I now receive thee in thy Tent,
Dreadfully graceful from the Field of Blood,
The manly Dew ſtill reeking on thy Brow.
O let me ſooth my Hero to his Reſt,
Then kindly chide his Eagerneſs of Valour,
And bid him ſheath the Sword for Love of me.

K. HENRY.

To thee I am devoted from this Hour:
I'll give Mankind my looſe ſuperfluous Moments,
But Love ſhall claim my more ſubſtantial Care.
No petty Monarchs ſhall divide us more:
France and her King have felt the Wrath of HARRY.
I flew on Wings of Victory to War,
And like celeſtial Fire conſum'd the Foe;
Then halted in the mid Career of Glory:
Conqueſt was Waſte of Time: Quick I return'd,
And left the Buſineſs of the World unfiniſh'd.

ROSAMOND.

Forgive me, HENRY, if I ſhed a Tear;
A Tear, at once, of Pity, and of Love.
Gaze not thus fondly on me whilſt I ſpeak:
It is a fatal Fondneſs, and betrays thee.
Poſſeſs'd of me, art thou not loſt to Honour?
Where is the native Greatneſs of thy Soul?
Thy gen'rous Thirſt of everlaſting Glory?
O hadſt thou never fix'd thine Eyes on me,
Fame, on her brazen Tablet, had diſplay'd
Thy Royal Name, and ſhewn it to the Stars.
But I ſhall blot thy Memory for ever.

K. HENRY.

Thy kind Concern is far too nice, my Love:
O ROSAMOND! 'tis but the Dream of Pride:
Kings, and their Subjects all, are Nature's Children;

And

And ermin'd Greatneſs on the Throne muſt own it.
What is the Monarch more than other Men?
His Appetites and Paſſions are the ſame;
He hates, revenges, hopes, and fears, as they do;
Or does he love, O does he love like me,
'Tis Glory, 'tis Ambition, to purſue
The heav'nly Fair, and win her to his Wiſhes.
Is it not Pride to hang upon thy Smiles?
Is it not Triumph to enfold thee thus?
Art thou not All, and is not this World Nothing?

ROSAMOND.

I could for ever liſten to thy Voice:
Whene'er thou ſpeak'ſt, Reaſon gives up the Cauſe,
And Nature whiſpers, what thou ſay'ſt is right.

K. HENRY.

Be Love the Theme, and I could talk for ever.

ROSAMOND.

Be Love the Theme, I could for ever hear thee.

K. HENRY.

O come, my rural Goddeſs, to my Arms:
We'll lie upon the Flow'r-enamell'd Turf;
The Garland-Wreath ſhall be our Diadem;
The Leaf-clad Bow'r our Canopy of State;
Our Muſic the ſweet Matin of the Lark:
Then bleſs me with the Sunſhine of thy Beauty,
Till I forget my Royal Occupation,
The Taſk of Greatneſs, and the Toil of Power,
And ev'ry Senſe be full of Love and thee.

ROSAMOND.

How does thy Language charm my liſt'ning Ears?
Yet muſt I dread this Indolence of Thought,
The *Scotchmen*, and their King, are up in Arms;
And, if Report ſay true, th' Invaſion boaſts
The Countenance of your Son.

K. HENRY.

Fear not, my Love:
My better Genius ſhall protect me ſtill.
Lend me thy Lip——Danger ſeems nothing now.

O lead

O lead me to ſome peaceful, cloſe Retreat,
Where all is calm and gentle as thy Breaſt.
Let hoſtile War advance, and Faction rage,
I will not deign to give Mankind a Look,
But ſafely reſt within thy faithful Arms.
So, when the Pilgrim views the Storm ariſe,
To the kind Shelter of ſome Grot he flies,
And in that ſweet Receſs ſecurely lies.
Fearleſs he hears the dreadful Tempeſts roar,
And madding Ocean burſting on the Shore;
The Heav'ns in vain their flaming Terrors ſpread,
And Thunders roll unheeded o'er his Head.

[*Exeunt.*

The End of the FIRST ACT.

ACT

ACT II.

SCENE I.

Enter King HENRY, *Duke of* CORNWALL, *and Attendants.*

K. HENRY.

COMES on our Brother *Scotland?*

CORNWALL.

Yes, my Liege:
He means to give my Lord of *Cheſter* Battle.

K. HENRY.

Be't ſo: Our Arms ſhall tame his Inſolence.
Where is our Son? His uncurb'd Spirit of late
Gives Cauſe of ſome Suſpicion: Yet we hope,
In humble wiſe, he will confeſs the Fault
Of his abrupt Departure. His new Friends
(No Friends to me; tho' Foes, I fear them not)
He muſt abandon; and, mean time, we truſt,
A Look of our Diſpleaſure ſhall controul
His heedleſs Folly, and enforce his Duty.

CORNWALL.

My Liege, the Queen.

K. HENRY.

I would have ſhunn'd her; for ſhe awes my Soul.
I know her ſtill a tender faithful Wife,
Wrong'd as ſhe is: 'Tis my eternal Guilt,
That love I cannot, where I muſt eſteem.
She comes—Why ſtarts my Breaſt?—I muſt aſſume
The cruel Port of Shame-proof Villainy.

Enter

[*Enter* QUEEN.

Excuſe my Freedom, Madam, if I aſk,
What Buſineſs has the Queen of *England* here?

QUEEN.

I come by virtue of a better Title:
Was ELINOR no more than Queen of *England*,
She had not thus diſturb'd you with her Preſence.
Am I nought elſe, my Lord?

K. HENRY.

Ay, thou'rt my Wife;
A Name that ſounds offenſive in my Ear.

QUEEN.

Why didſt thou teach me 'twas a pleaſing Name,
Importing Peace, and Harmony, and Joy?
You lov'd me, when you made me what I am;
And yet you lov'd me but to make me wretched.

K. HENRY.

Love you have learnt, and ſo all Women can.
Didſt thou e'er learn Obedience to a Husband?

QUEEN.

Can Malice ſay I ever fail'd in that?

K. HENRY.

I pr'ythee then be dutiful, and leave me.

QUEEN.

This Treatment is unkind. Is that the Voice,
That oft hath chid me for a Moment's Abſence?
Does it diſpleaſe thee to behold me thus?
Blame not the Weakneſs which yourſelf have caus'd:
'Tis Grief's allow'd Prerogative to mourn;
For ſure it is no Crime to be diſtreſs'd.

K. HENRY.

Away! Thy Woman's Tears are loſt on me.
Why doſt thou plead againſt Neceſſity?
It was in Spite of me, I lov'd thee once;
And 'twas in Spite of me, that I forſook thee:
The Tie of Marriage is but perſonal;
For Love alone's the Cement of the Heart.

Yet grant that Contract good, my Falſhood voids it.
I am no Huſband: Why art thou a Wife?
The Bond is cancell'd. Be as free as I am;
And take thy Heart from this ungrateful Object.

QUEEN.

Can the ſwift Current to its Spring recede?
Or elemental Fire to Earth deſcend?
Then only my fixt Thought can turn from thee.
My Love, tho' ill repaid, ſhall ſhine a Pattern
Of Faith unmov'd, without Reproach, for ever:
HENRY, tho' cruel, yet is HENRY ſtill.
What was it, but my Love, that ſent me hither?
I thought I durſt not come—but ſtill I came,
Unwelcom'd, ſlighted Stranger as I am.

K. HENRY.

I ſee thy Virtue, and reſpect it, ELINOR:
But what is Virtue in the Eye of Love?
Fate wrongly join'd us, and miſmatch'd our Hearts.
Thou art fram'd tender, innocent, and good,
For private Comfort, and domeſtic Joy:
My reſtleſs Spirit ranges uncontroul'd,
As Fancy ſways, or lawleſs Paſſion guides.

QUEEN.

And yet thou canſt be true, tho' not to me:
That reſtleſs Spirit ROSAMOND can rule,
The Miſtreſs of my Property, thy Heart.
Throw that deteſted Wanton from thy Breaſt:
The Pride of Woman's Nature ſues for this.
O do not wrong me in the Face of Day,
And I will bear thy Hate with Chearfulneſs.

K. HENRY.

Thou haſt the Licence of an injur'd Wife;
And 'tis a Woman's Privilege to rail;
Elſe, let me tell thee, ELINOR, 'twere Treaſon,
What thou haſt juſt now ſaid.

QUEEN.

I aſk your Pardon:
I had forgot how dearly HENRY loves her;

And

And 'tis my Duty to promote his Joy:
Nor juſtly can I hate ev'n her my Rival;
Woman is frail, and HENRY more than Man:
Be happy then, bleſt Pair, while I'm undone:
A jealous Wife no more ſhall ſpoil your Loves:
I will not taint your Peace with one Upbraiding,
But lay me down without a Groan, and die.

K. HENRY.

This Tenderneſs reproaches me yet more
Than all the juſt Invectives thou couldſt offer.
O live to ſcorn the Man has wrong'd thee thus.
Provoke I not thy utmoſt Enmity?

QUEEN.

Thou canſt provoke my Sorrows, not my Hate.

K. HENRY.

Have I not giv'n thee Cauſe? Be but my Foe,
I ſhall enjoy the Sharpneſs of thy Malice;
But Goodneſs undeſerv'd, unaſk'd, torments me.
Love, Honour, Pity, tear my lab'ring Soul. [*Aſide.*

QUEEN.

Life had been happy with thee—But 'tis paſt;
And I ſubmit—Live, and be happy thou.

K. HENRY.

By Heav'n, this moves my Stubbornneſs of Temper;
And ROSAMOND, and ELINOR, diſtract me.
Muſt I then ruin one, whom Laws divine,
And my free Choice, decreed mine own for ever,
And coolly mark her cloſe her Eyes in Death?
Or can I leave the gentle ROSAMOND,
That tender Prime of Youth, that Spring of Beauty,
Firſt won by Promiſe of eternal Love?
Painful Extreme of Madneſs, either Way!
For either Way I'm doom'd to be a Villain.

QUEEN.

Seek not Excuſes for thy broken Vows:
I freely give thoſe ſacred Pledges back;
Nor ſhall I e'er aſcribe the Pangs I ſuffer,
To HENRY's Crime, but Heav'n's afflicting Hand.

I know thee great and noble ſtill by Nature.
Thou wilt hereafter reverence my Name,
And praiſe the Woman, whom thou could'ſt not love.

K. HENRY.

O Heart, Heart, Heart, why art thou not my own?
Hadſt thou attack'd me like a Fiend from Hell,
Arm'd with keen Malice, and ſevereſt Wrath,
I had not ſhunn'd the Conflict: But as now
Thou ſhineſt Angel-like, and all-forgiving,
Thou doſt perforce convict my guilty Soul,
And ſink my Thoughts in black Deſpair for ever.
O ELINOR, my Queen!——But ſoft, ſome News.

Enter GUARD.

My Liege, the young Prince HENRY waits without,
And aſks Admiſſion to your Majeſty.

K. HENRY.

He comes in proper Time: Let him advance.

[*Enter Prince* HENRY.

Well, thou young Man!—With what a lordly Look
Thou mak'ſt Approach—Doſt thou not know me, HARRY?

P. HENRY.

Yes, Sir, you are my Father, and my King;
Names ſacred both: But ſtill more ſacred thoſe
Of Faith, and Honour; theſe are what enroll
The Monarch's Name in Glory's noble Liſt,
And ſtamp ſubſtantial Royalty upon him.
Th' Imperial Robe, the bright-deck'd Diadem,
The lifted Brow, the World-commanding Nod,
Ay, and the loud-tongu'd Voice of Acclamation,
That bears up frail Mortality to Heav'n;
Theſe all are Majeſty's Appendages;
The Dreſs, but not the Subſtance; that diſgrace
The Undeſerver, and but lift him high
To a Pre-eminence of ſplendid Shame.

K. HENRY.

What! art thou come to preach to us, thou Boy?
Are theſe th' obſequious Terms of filial Duty?

But

But mark, I henceforth warn thee to Obedience;
And therefore ſatisfy our Royal Pleaſure
Why thou didſt leave the Court?

P. HENRY.

That's a plain Queſtion,
My Mother could have anſwer'd.

K. HENRY.

Hah, our Queen!
Thou ſeem'ſt ſurpris'd. Is that a Face of Guilt?
Speak, ſpeak; for my ſhock'd Soul has form'd a Thought
Too black for Utt'rance.

QUEEN.

By my Hopes of Heav'n,
(For there perhaps I ſhall at laſt have Peace)
I only know that I am innocent.

P. HENRY.

I know no more than that, and that's enough.
Shall I beſeech awhile your Royal Ear
To give me patient Audience?

K. HENRY.

Well, I'll hear thee.

P. HENRY.

Did HENRY leave the Court? Not ſo, my Liege;
For HENRY left a Brothel, not a Court:
Looſe Riot and Intemperance dwelt there,
Soft-ſeated Indolence, and Female Foppery,
And pamper'd Jollity, with full-blown Cheeks,
Keeping high Feſtival, and Jubilee.
Was it for me to truſt my Spring of Youth,
That takes Impreſſion like the yielding Wax,
With ſuch licentious Characters as theſe?
Was it for me, to ſink in Luxury,
To ſee a dimpled Harlot's wanton Reign,
While, baniſh'd from your Houſe, your Board, your Bed,
The beſt of Women languiſh'd Time away,
At once a Widow, and at once a Wife?
I ſaw her Griefs, I heard her juſt Complaints,

I left, by her Advice, th'unhallow'd Roof,
Leſt I ſhould ſeem to abet the Injury,
And triumph o'er the Woes of her that bore me.

K. HENRY.

Woman has not her Match on this Side Hell:
Fool! to believe a ſcorn'd, abandon'd Wife
Leſs ſubtle, or malicious, than the Devil:
Is this the praying, dying ELINOR!
Curſe on thy fawning, Honey-ſteep'd Deceit!
What! doſt Thou practiſe with my ſecret Foes
In dev'liſh League? Doſt Thou foment Rebellion?
Say, Woman, doſt thou?

QUEEN.

What ſhall I ſay?
Wilt thou, thou raſh, hard-hearted Youth, undo me?
Revoke the impious Slander of thy Tongue,
And ſave thy Mother's Name from foul Diſhonour.

K. HENRY.

It is too late—I ſee confed'rate Miſchief,
This ſtripling Traytor has betray'd thy Counſel:
Thee I had long ſince hated, now deſpiſe.
For you, our ſometime Son, but that I ſcorn
To waſte a Thought upon thee, I could humble
That lofty Spirit, till its fallen Creſt
Should crouch, and offer Homage to the Duſt.
But Majeſty is fenc'd with Adamant,
Proof againſt Treaſon's Darts, that but recoil,
And mock the Force that threw them.—It is thus
The Ocean does but fret upon the Strand,
And the Storm breathes againſt the deep-bas'd Tow'r.

QUEEN.

Will it avail me to appeal to Heav'n?
O may its choiceſt Stores of Wrath conſume me,
If e'er in Word, or Thought, I urg'd this Variance!
He has abus'd thee with a well-feign'd Tale,
Screening ſome dreadful Purpoſe.

K. HENRY.

Peace, I ſay.
You've fool'd me once, and would you make me mad?
Hah!

Hah! who ſhall tame me then? By Heav'n, if Thought
But halts a Moment in Suſpenſe to doubt thee,
Full-fated Senſe rebukes it.

QUEEN.

O my Son,
The Pain thou gav'ſt me once, was Eaſe to this:
Why was thy Birth-day hail'd with general Joy?
Why did I bleſs the Sun that ſaw thee firſt?
Why did I fondly rear thy feeble Age?
Is thy Heart Flint? O yet unweave thy Craft,
Ere the ſad Scheme be ratify'd above,
And Fate has ſign'd the Warrant.

P. HENRY.

Let not theſe Fear-indited Words deceive
The King, while, on my Knee, I call to witneſs
The guardian Pow'rs that ſhield the Lives of Princes,
That not in pers'nal Pique, or private Grudge,
Or Peeviſhneſs of Appetite reſtrain'd,
Or the wild Policy of high Ambition,
I ſought this Breach; but in an honeſt View
Of Duty to a Mother's juſt Requeſt,
And Hope to reconcile you to her Love.

K. HENRY.

Thou ly'ſt as well as ſhe—You both meant more.

P. HENRY.

Abuſe fair-ſpoken Honour, and e'en Love
Becomes a Malecontent.

K. HENRY.

Damn'd Hypocrites!
Ye Home-bred Plagues, ye vile inteſtine Miſchiefs!
O had Rebellion bellow'd in the Field,
And boldly challeng'd forth the Lord's Anointed,
I could have calmly met its hotteſt Battle:
But to reflect on unſuſpected Treaſon,
Moſt unſuſpected, as unnatural,
Spreading its Poiſon ev'n within my Walls,
Inſulting in the ſacred Name of Juſtice,
Or ſtabbing with the ſmiling Look of Love;

This grinds my Thought—Now let Confuſion reign,
All Order and Relation be diſſolv'd:
And thou, O Nature, turn aſide thy Face,
Crimſon'd with Bluſhes—All my firm Reſolves
Are brittle now, and Patience turns a Fury.
Who's there? Our Loving Wife, and Loyal Son!

QUEEN.

Thy loving Wife, but moſt diſloyal Son
To me, and thee: Let me appeal, my Lord,
To the fair Judgment of your former Love.
Did I not ever make your Will my Law?
Was I deceitful, treach'rous, artful, then?
'Tis true, my Wrongs are great: but ſure no Wrongs
Can alter Nature, or invert the Mind:
My Wrongs call for Revenge; but ſure a Queen
Could well revenge a nobler Way than this.
O take my All, my Liberty, my Life;
But leave me, leave me, my good Name untainted.

K. HENRY.

Woman, no more. Have I not heard thy Son?

QUEEN.

He is no Son of mine.

P. HENRY.

What! would the Queen
So poorly yield her well-conteſted Right?
I know thy Cauſe, and know my Duty better.

QUEEN.

Take heed, ere yet an injur'd Mother's Curſe
Fix on thy Bloom of Youth.

P. HENRY.

Her Grief diſtracts her.
Yet let me quit my Honour to the King:
Wherein is my Complaint unwarrantable?
Is it Rebellion, Sir, to ſue for Juſtice,
Which the poor Country Hind, if he but loſe
His ſtarveling Scrap of Property, demands?
Is this deny'd your Son? Be the King ſure
I know my Right, and, knowing, dare maintain it.

K. HENRY.

K. HENRY.

Thou haſt no Right to move, to ſpeak, to breathe,
But with our Royal Licence: Ceaſe, thou Fool,
To parly with our high Authority:
Thy trait'rous Friends have poiſon'd thy young Ear:
HARRY, I know them well: But mark, I charge thee,
Forſake for ever all that Vermin Tribe;
Or know their rotten Counſels will undo thee.

P. HENRY.

Forſake my Friends? Hear me, all-conſcious Heav'n,
While I renounce the baſe unmanly Thought:
Forbid it, Juſtice! and forbid it, Honour!
Not one of them but lives in my beſt Love,
Dear as the vital Stream, that warms my Heart:
Great are their Virtues, and their Perſons ſacred:
Let the whole World be told, my Life protects them:
And here I ſwear, not all the Pow'rs combin'd,
Of Earth or Hell, ſhall drive me from this Purpoſe.

K. HENRY.

Hah! Didſt thou ever ſee thy King in Wrath?
If my large Weight of Vengeance fall upon thee,
'Twill cruſh thee, like an Inſect, into Duſt.
What! am I brav'd by thee? Shall HENRY walk
Within the ſcanty Sphere of thy Preſcription?
Fame, ſtop thy Mouth; nor be it known abroad,
That He, whoſe wide Circumference of Sway
In its vaſt Fold embraces Nations round,
Was tutor'd by a Boy: Droop thy Head, Greatneſs,
If Striplings ſhall give Law to Pow'r like mine.
Be wiſe in Time, and know, young Counſellor,
Our Wiſdom pities thy raw Youth; but learn
More low Demeanour, or thou'lt fire my Blood,
And damn thyſelf for ever.

P. HENRY.

Words are Wind;
Still noiſy, but not hurtful: 'Tis that Blood,
That

That Blood of thine, that ſparkles in my Veins,
Forbids Capitulation: Could I brook
Terms of high Challenge, I were not your Offſpring.
Shall I be frighted, when an old Man ſtorms?
Or fear a peeviſh Father in my Foe?
Let Majeſty ſhine forth in all its Pow'r,
I dare, unmov'd, behold its fierceſt Blaze;
And like an Eagle face this burning Sun.
So take thy unregarded Threatnings back.

K. HENRY. [Guard.

Still ſo untam'd, young Man!——What Hoa! our

[*Enter Guard.*

P. HENRY.

Stand off, ye Miniſters of Tyranny.
Who dares with impious Hand to touch our Perſon,
I ſpurn to Hell's black Centre.—Ye vile Slaves,
Be motionleſs at our ſupreme Command:
See ye not ſacred Majeſty about us?
Sir, we well know our ſov'reign Dignity,
When thus infring'd—The Crown, your Grant beſtow'd,
With our beſt Force we will till Death defend.

K. HENRY.

It is enough—Hence from our Sight for ever.

P. HENRY.

A laſt Farewel to Duty! You're obey'd.
And know, if ever more I greet your Ear,
'Twill be with Thunder, and the Voice of War.

[*Exit* PRINCE.

K. HENRY.

Impetuous in his Folly, let him go.
This Notice has diminiſh'd Majeſty.
See you this Night arreſt the Earl of LEICESTER:

[*To the Guard.*

I know him well the Pillar of the Faction.
Our Queen ſtill here!—in Tears!—She's innocent—
Ay, and the Devil's not black—Away, falſe Woman!
Follow, for Shame, this Hero of thy own,

Or

Or curſe thy diſappointed Fraud at Home:
O you have vext my Heart—But ROSAMOND
With Love ſhall heal it—To her Arms I fly—
What! do I gall thee with that envy'd Name?
Thank Heav'n, my utmoſt Hate is Juſtice now:
So, ELINOR, farewel; Rave, and deſpair,
Then die, and be thy Name forgot for ever.

[*Exeunt* KING, *&c.*

Manet QUEEN.

And ſhall I then expoſtulate with Heav'n?
Impious, and vain! No rather let me die,
Periſh for him, for whom alone I liv'd;
And, ſelf-acquitted, leave the World in Peace.
The watchful Eye of Providence, that ſees
Thro' Night's moſt ſable Shade, and well diſcerns
Each dark Intrigue, each Crevice of the Heart,
Shall one Day vindicate my Innocence,
And crown my injur'd Love with Praiſe immortal.
Then, when I'm laid in Duſt, my cruel Lord,
O'er my cold Grave ſhall ſhed a pitying Tear,
And own, I well deſerv'd a happier Fate.

[*Exit.*

SCENE II.

Enter King HENRY, *and* ROSAMOND.

ROSAMOND.

And will you go?

K. HENRY.

But for this Night, my Fair.

ROSAMOND.

This Night: how many Hours are in this Night?
How many Minutes in each tedious Hour?
Methinks I dare not truſt thee from my Arms.

K. HENRY.

K. HENRY.

Thou know'ſt, my Love, the ſolemn Vow I made:
I muſt do Penance at the ſacred Shrine
Of *Becket*, ere I cloſe mine Eyes in Sleep.
The Holy Father of the Church injoin'd it.
If I refuſe, I draw upon mine Head,
Curſes, Anathemas, and Execrations,
And all th' Artillery of angry Prieſthood.
This once perform'd, I am thy own for ever.

ROSAMOND.

O let my Lord excuſe my ſelfiſh Fears:
For what is HENRY's Safety but my own?

K. HENRY.

Why, we ſhall live to triumph over both,
This Traitreſs Queen, and fierce hot-headed Son.
But I forget them, while I view thy Beauty;
Sole Comfort adequate to kingly Care:
The ſoothing Freſhneſs of the vernal Breeze,
The lulling Notes of dying Harmony,
The rapt'rous Calm of good Mens golden Dreams,
Bring not ſuch balmy Quiet to the Soul,
As thy Senſe-ſtealing Softneſs.

ROSAMOND.

Can my Love
Stray but a Moment, ev'n in Thought, from thee,
Joy of my Life, and Sov'reign of my Wiſhes?
Such Sighs as theſe within your Boſom heav'd,
Such lively Fondneſs ſparkled in your Eyes,
Such tuneful Accents trembled on your Tongue,
When firſt tranſported at my Feet you ſigh'd,
My Royal Captive, and there ſwore you lov'd.

K. HENRY.

Thy Charms had caught me but ſome Days before.
Let me look back on that delightful Hour;
'Twas in an Ev'ning of the blooming *May*,
The Nymphs, and Swains, in rural Garb attir'd,
To the Pipe's woodland Strain, upon the Lawn,

In mirthful Freedom, join'd the ſprightly Dance;
You ſhone ſuperior 'midſt the Virgin Throng,
Faireſt among the Fair: Auſpicious Fortune
Had led my Steps that Way: I came, I ſaw,
And, ſeeing, lov'd.

ROSAMOND.

Love, like a watchful Spy, ſurpris'd my Heart,
Well-fitted to receive the ſoft Impreſſion:
Thy graceful Preſence drew my wond'ring Eyes:
I ſigh'd, but knew not 'twas a Sigh of Love;
I wept, but knew not that I wept for thee;
Till Nature by degrees inform'd my Heart,
And ſomething told me I was made for you.

K. HENRY.

For me, for me alone; thoſe heav'nly Charms,
Had been diſhonour'd by inferior Love:
Nature deſign'd thee for the nobleſt Conqueſt,
And, giving thee ſuch Excellence of Beauty,
Wiſely contriv'd a Bleſſing for a Monarch.

ROSAMOND.

And, of all Monarchs, only for my HENRY,
Who ſhines diſtinguiſh'd 'midſt a Tribe of Kings,
As they among the vulgar Herd.

K. HENRY.

Enough:
Be it my Glory to deſerve thy Sweetneſs.

ROSAMOND.

Be it my Glory to repay thy Truth.

K. HENRY.

How ſtrong the Tie which Love himſelf has made!
One dear Embrace, and for this Night adieu!

ROSAMOND.

I grudge ev'n Saints a Moment of thy Time:
How ſhall I ſigh, and languiſh, in thy Abſence?
How ſhall I ſpring to hail thy ſafe Return,
With a fond Heart full-fraught with Love and Joy?

So

So the poor Bird ſits penſive in her Neſt,
While tender Fears diſturb her anxious Breaſt:
At length ſhe kens her Mate with piercing Eye,
On rapid Pinions ſkim along the Sky:
With welcome Notes ſhe chears the vocal Grove,
And fondly chirps, and bills, with moſt officious
Love.

[*Exeunt*

The End of the SECOND ACT.

ACT

ACT III.

SCENE I.

Enter Lord CLIFFORD *in Diſguiſe.*

HENRY muſt paſs this Way for BECKET's Tomb:
While thus attir'd, like a poor begging Friar,
I ſhall eſcape his Knowlege: I muſt win
His Ear to my Diſcourſe; while I relate
The piteous Story of my Sufferings,
And circumſtantially deſcribe my Woes,
In Terms ſo clear, that the Similitude
Himſelf portraiting ſtrongly to himſelf,
Shall ſtrike upon his Soul. With a dim Eye
Perſonal Guilt is view'd; an Atom Spot
Sharp-ſighted Cenſure ſees in other Men:
What tho' our barren Conf'rence have no Iſſue?
At leaſt I ſhall unload my burden'd Heart,
And probe his wounded Conſcience to the Quick.
But hold——He comes.

[*Enter King* HENRY.

K. HENRY.

'Tis much——What! to ſubmit
To painful Chaſtiſement, and on the Flint
Wear out the ſlow-pac'd Night!—Be we content;
'Tis to appeaſe our holy Mother Church——
I like this Cloiſter's awful Solitude:
It ſeems the Dwelling-place of Meditation.

Hah!

Hah! who comes tow'rds us with ſo ſad an Aſpect?
Sure he's the youngeſt Son of Miſery.
Lo here a Beggar, and a King! Wide Contraſt!
Yet paſs one Moment, all Diſtinctions vaniſh,
And Majeſty incorporates with Duſt:
Let Pride go weep: It may amuſe my Thought,
To hide the King, and commune with this Fellow.
What hoa, Friend, who are you?

CLIFFORD.

Why, who art thou,
That doſt not know LORENZO, the poor Friar?

K. HENRY.

I'm come to pay Devotion to Saint THOMAS,
And am a Stranger here.

CLIFFORD.

I crave your Pardon.
Thou ſeem'ſt of noble Blood.

K. HENRY.

Well haſt thou ſaid;
For ſuch I am.

CLIFFORD.

Then, Sir, you know King HENRY.

K. HENRY.

Exceeding well. I oft attend his Court,
But why's thy Tongue familiar with that Name?

CLIFFORD.

Becauſe I take a Pride to let thee know,
That, wretched as I am, this Arm has ſerv'd him.

K. HENRY.

If well, I truſt, that Service was repaid.

CLIFFORD.

As Avarice could wiſh: Ev'n to this Day
He is the Idol of my Memory;
I ſerv'd him in his early Prime of Glory.
His Soldiers lov'd him all; for all believ'd him
The beſt of Kings, his Country's Friend and Father.
O, he was noble, gen'rous, brave, and juſt;

Pow'rful,

Pow'rful, but to protect, and not oppreſs,
Fear'd and renown'd abroad, and lov'd at Home.

K. HENRY.

Praiſe undeſerv'd is Satire's bitt'reſt Gall. [*Aſide.*
In Faith thou haſt deſcrib'd his Highneſs well:
Methinks there is right Honeſty about thee:
Thy Talk exceeds the Promiſe of that Habit.

CLIFFORD.

Sir, I was once no Stranger to good Fortune.—
But wherefore do I hold this Talk? Farewel.

K. HENRY.

Yet ſtay; for thou haſt mov'd my Soul to learn
The wretched Circumſtances of thy Life.
Why is thy Look thus ſad and diſcontented?
Does not Religion's Garb ſit eaſy on thee?
Say, wherefore didſt thou leave the Royal Camp,
To live immur'd within theſe holy Walls;
Yet now, unmindful of thy Dedication,
Doſt nauſeate the Cup of Poverty
Thyſelf haſt ſworn to drink?

CLIFFORD.

Thou doſt not know
What 'tis to be diſtreſs'd—I could diſplay
A Scene ſo mournful to thy ſtartled Ear,
Thy Wonder ſhould be ſwallow'd up in Pity.
Canſt thou lend Patience to an old Man's Prattle?

K. HENRY.

I will.

CLIFFORD.

Know then the holy Brotherhood
Combat with more in this religious Warfare,
Than Down-repoſing Luxury e'er dreamt of.
We're Men, but yet no Members of Mankind:
This Monaſtery is to us, our World;
Yon melancholy Cells thou ſeeſt, our Home;
There ev'ry Night, in penſive Meditation,
We watch the Lamp's dull Gleam; and when we ſleep,
'Tis but what Nature ſteals from rigid Duty,

Till the ſhrill Cock, the Uſher of the Morn,
Awakes us to the Diſcipline of Day.
Our homely Meals are low, and regular;
And while we ſtay the Rage of Appetite,
We ſtarve the dainty Palate: To be brief,
Wealth, Buſineſs, Pleaſure, Honour we renounce,
And all of us are Wretches, by Engagement:
'Tis thus we ſtruggle with Mortality,
Rather than live. What think you of our State?

K. HENRY.

'Tis all that Man can do tow'rds earning Heav'n;
It is Extremity of Wretchedneſs.
But yet——

CLIFFORD.

Ha, ha, ha.

K. HENRY.

What can provoke thy Mirth?

CLIFFORD.

Your Ignorance;
For in this Light thou ſeeſt me to Advantage:
All this is Happineſs, to what I ſuffer:
Was this the mighty Sum of all my Sorrow,
Theſe Eyes ſhould ſtart in Tranſport from their Orbs,
And my old Heart-ſtrings crack with riſing Joy.

K HENRY.

Thy Fortune has been mercileſs indeed,
If this ſad Place be Sorrow's Sanctuary.

CLIFFORD.

What's this, Sir, to the Poignancy of Woe,
To inward Grief, to vital Agony,
And the keen Pang, that gnaws upon the Heart?
Poor tho' he is, the Man whoſe Mind's at Eaſe,
Beneath the Straw-built Roof enjoys his Sleep;
At pinching Hunger's Importunity
Epicure-like devours his ſavoury Scrap;
And, joyous, as the brain-ſick Reveller,
Quaffs down the unadulterated Stream.

But

But O! how bitter is the ſcanty Morſel,
That, feeding Life, but nouriſhes Deſpair!

K. HENRY.

How loudly does the Voice of Grief demand
The ſocial Tear! O what is mortal Man,
That may be brought thus low? 'Twill glad my Soul
To make this Fellow happy. [*Aſide.*

CLIFFORD.

Stranger, I thank thy Tears; they ſhew thee noble:
Pity flows always from the manly Heart.
Have you a Daughter, Sir?

K. HENRY.

Say, why that Queſtion?

CLIFFORD.

O, I had one; ſo fair, ſo innocent!——
Excuſe my Tears.

K. HENRY.

Thou ſeem'ſt to ſpeak of her
In pleaſing Terms—So fair, ſo innocent!

CLIFFORD.

O ſhe was once the Treaſure of my Soul;
Bright as the Morning's freſh-expanded Beam,
And ſpotleſs as the white-rob'd Angels are:
Whene'er I taught her Honour's ſacred Law,
Her ſtill Attention, and obſequious Look,
Seem'd the Certificates of inborn Virtue:
Sometimes I've trac'd her Mother in her Face,
Pleas'd to recall the Spring-tide of my Days,
And travel o'er Youth's chearful Road again.
For her I left the Buſineſs of the Field,
Well-pleas'd I toil'd a rural Life away,
And, joyful, ſaw my golden Harveſts riſe:
But Plenty, Peace, and Comfort, are no more;
Her coward Virtue ſtoop'd to brutal Love.
I could not bear the Shame: I left my Houſe;
The Fugitive of Choice, and not of Fortune:
Sick of this worthleſs World, at length I ſought

This Cloiſter of religious Poverty;
And here I mean to lay down Life, and Sorrow.

K. HENRY.

Thy Loftineſs of Soul amazes me.
Who was the Villain that abus'd thy Daughter?
Perdition on his Head!

CLIFFORD.

That cuts me deep:
My moſt invet'rate Foe had ſpar'd my Fame;
But him that ruin'd it, I call'd my Friend:
He was the Man I honour'd from my Soul:
I thought him honeſt, noble, juſt, and true;
But found him treach'rous, wicked, falſe, and baſe.

K. HENRY.

What means my Heart? Thou hadſt a Daughter,
CLIFFORD. [*Aſide.*

CLIFFORD.

My hoſpitable Doors had juſt receiv'd him,
A welcome Gueſt, a ſmiling Murderer;
While Confidenee in his ſuperior Worth
Made the curſt Work of my Undoing eaſy.

K. HENRY.

The Dagger's Point, the Scorpion's deadly Bite,
Wound not like theſe Soul-penetrating Words:
I'm like this very Villain. [*Aſide.*

CLIFFORD.

You're diſturb'd, Sir.

K. HENRY.

No, not at all. Proceed you in your Tale.

CLIFFORD.

To this Ingratitude he added more:
I had been Guardian to his tender Youth;
And (for I found a warlike Spirit in him)
Train'd him to hard Fatigues, and manly Toil;
We ſerv'd together in the Wars abroad,
And I was ſtill his Pattern in the Battle:
Fame has ſince then ſpoke loudly in his Praiſe:
But, be he e'er ſo great, I made him ſo.

K.

K. HENRY.

I ſtand condemn'd — it is — it cannot be —
Sure he's a Meſſenger from angry Heav'n,
Sent to arraign my Soul. [*Aſide.*

CLIFFORD.

Are you well, Sir?

K. HENRY.

A ſudden Qualm has ſeiz'd me: But 'twill off;
'Tis a familiar Malady ——— Accept
Theſe Alms—I muſt be gone—Again to-morrow—

CLIFFORD.

But one Word more; ſomething remains untold.
He further ow'd a nearer Obligation
To my Heart's Love: For once in Heat of Fight,
When he had broke his Sword, the deſp'rate Foe,
With his broad Falchion, aiming at his Head,
Had levell'd him to Earth; when I ruſh'd in,
And diſappointed Fate: This wounded Breaſt,
Bears yet the honeſt Record of that Service:
Pleaſe you, look here.

K. HENRY.

Give me more Air. Away! [*Exit.*

CLIFFORD.

He has it deep: I mark'd his ſtartled Conſcience:
I drove the keen Reproach into his Heart:
He ſhook like a raw Novice in his Guilt.
May Heav'n indent th' Impreſſion on his Soul! —
This is a buſy Ev'ning; at this Hour,
And near this Place, my Letter did appoint
The Earl of LEICESTER to an Interview.
I am no more a Beggar in Diſguiſe,
But here an open, and avenging Foe. [*Exit.*

SCENE II.

Enter QUEEN, *and Duke of* CORNWALL.

QUEEN.

Thou haſt well flatter'd my deſponding Soul,
That had forgot to hope: O Pain of Doubt,
Next to Deſpair!

CORNWALL.

Let not the QUEEN diſtruſt
Theſe Means of good Succeſs: I've wiſh'd long ſince,
T' aſſiſt thy Exigence, and, but juſt now,
Conſulted ſev'rally the Royal Guard,
That keep the Watch To-night at her Apartment:
I've won them to your Int'reſt, on Condition,
No Wrong be offer'd to the Fair-one's Perſon.
At Midnight's ſilent Hour, nought will obſtruct
The fatal Viſitation.

QUEEN.

My good Lord,
I thank thy Friendſhip; by my Hopes of Peace,
The Perſon of my Rival ſhall be ſacred:
'Twill pain me to diſſemble Cruelty;
For I have all the Softneſs of my Sex,
But no Reſentment, jealous Rage, and Malice,
That wont t'inflame the Breaſt of injur'd Woman.

CORNWALL.

Hard by yon Hill, where now the Lamp of Day
Sea-ward deſcends, there ſtands a fam'd old Convent.
Ne'er had Religion a more awful Manſion.
A Stream ſlow-gliding winds about its Borders,
Upon whoſe Banks ſtands a long Range of Oaks,
That caſt a wide Solemnity of Shade:
O'er the high Walls the creeping Ivy climbs,
And in its high-arch'd Vaults no Sounds are heard

But

But whiſtling Winds, and deep-ton'd *Falls* of Water:
Remorſe, and Horror, dwell for ever there;
It is the Seat of Penitence and Sorrow.
Thither be ROSAMOND this Night convey'd;
And, for the reſt, truſt Heav'n.

QUEEN.

This may ſecure
My wretched Rival; but the KING, my Lord!
How ſhall I face his Anger? For I know——
Alas! I do not know how much he loves her.

CORNWALL.

Believe me, ev'ry Circumſtance ſhall end
In ample Illuſtration of thy Virtue.
My Lord of CHESTER has o'erthrown the *Scots*,
So ſhall you ſoon ſtand clear of all Suſpicion
Of aiding jointly with your Son the War,
And injur'd Innocence again ſhall triumph.

QUEEN.

Good Omens dwell upon thy pleaſing Words.
But let us hence, that I may teach my Heart
This Night's important Taſk. [*Exeunt.*

Enter Lord LEICESTER *with a Letter.*

Fortune, thou doſt exceed thy Vot'ry's Hope;
Fate does my Work herſelf, and ſpares my Pains:
How had my Brain been toiling for this Hour?
She wills me meet her here —the gentle Dame——
HARRY, this once I give thee leave to reſt;
Night's Mantle, dy'd in blackeſt *Erebus*, [Hour,
Shroud thy unconſcious Thought — Pauſe, this bleſt
The nobler Movements of my buſy Soul,
And let me ſtoop to Beauty's pleaſing Lure:
Thus the bold Bird of Prey, the princely Vulture,
Forgets a while his bloody Occupation,
To hold an am'rous Parley with his Mate.
Comes ſhe? or—Hah!—by Hell 'tis CLIFFORD's Self.
Unlucky Stars! But, Stateſman, to thy Work.

Enter Lord CLIFFORD.

CLIFFORD.

Good Even to my Lord. You ſeem'd in Thought.

LEICESTER.

In Faith, my good Lord CLIFFORD, ſo I was.
I have ſome certain Smatch of Poeſy,
And, walking forth to taſte the Ev'ning's Freſhneſs,
My Wit 'gan to be ſomewhat humourſome:
I fear your Lordſhip has quite marr'd my Sonnet.

CLIFFORD.

What, does the Paper you juſt folded up
Contain the Subſtance?

LEICESTER.

A ſhort Sketch, my Lord,
My Muſe in Miniature; a very Trifle.

CLIFFORD.

Say, LEICESTER, is't a Time to trifle now?
Peace to thy Heart, I think the Seaſon's ſickly.

LEICESTER.

Why, ſo do I; and, truſt me, noble CLIFFORD,
'Tis but to cheat away my Melancholy,
I ſometimes condeſcend to be a Fool.

CLIFFORD.

O I could be a Fool, or ev'n a Knave;
Could rank me with the common ſavage Crew,
Turn Hireling, drudging Slave, and carry Burdens,
And feed on ſcanty Scraps with Dogs on Dunghils,
If I could purchaſe, with this Sum of Miſery,
My wonted Peace of Mind. Sure I'm ſo wretched,
Fate fix'd me for its Maſterpiece of Malice.

LEICESTER.

Great are thy Wrongs indeed: Yet we all ſuffer;
'Tis epidemical, this State Diſorder.
And who can cure the Fever, but ourſelves?
We'll be our own Phyſicians, my good Lord,
And let out this hot Blood.

CLIF-

CLIFFORD.

I'm not ſo deſp'rate in my Purpoſes:
Headſtrong Impatience ſwells beyond its Charter,
And I muſt tell thee, I've that Senſe of Honour,
That I could bear a Thouſand groſs Affronts,
That ſtink ev'n to the Sun, before the Guile
Of artful Villainy, that lurks unſeen,
And ruins while it ſmiles.

LEICESTER.

Ev'n ſo, good CLIFFORD:
Sure a clandeſtine Traitor is the vileſt:
The Devil's moſt odious Quality is his Cunning:
Let us not think your Lordſhip has ſuch Foes:
Mean time make uſe of me, and my Soul's Friendſhip.

CLIFFORD.

Hah, LEICSTER, doſt thou know what Friendſhip is?
'Tis not the fawning Cringe, the ſtudy'd Smile,
The honey-dropping Speech, or ſolemn Vow;
It is a ſacred Ray of heav'nly Love:
Like that, rejoicing in the Good of others,
It ſcorns the narrow Bounds of Selfiſhneſs,
And knows no Bliſs ſincere, but ſocial Joy:
Simple and plain, it ſhines in naked Truth,
And opens all the Sluices of the Heart.

LEICESTER.

What means all this?

CLIFFORD.

I know no double Meaning.

LEICESTER.

I thought I had been known, and try'd enough,
Not to be troubled with a pedant Lecture:
Let me, my Lord, tell you another Truth;
Diſtruſt is Friendſhip's Canker.

CLIFFORD.

Then, I fear me,
Our Friendſhip waxes tow'rd a Diſſolution:
Becauſe ſometimes Diſtruſt is kin to Prudence.

LEI-

LEICESTER.

That, as your Lordſhip thinks. For my own Part,
I know the Man will thank me for my Service;
And ſo Good-night.

CLIFFORD.

Nay, hold; you go not yet:
For I have that to ſay will make your Heart ſick,
Before we part.

LEICESTER.

What doſt thou mean, old Dotard?
Thee, and thy peeviſh Menace, I defy.

CLIFFORD.

Then I demand, in Honour's ſacred Name,
As Thou would'ſt here make good thy Honeſty,
That thou unfold the Purport of that Paper,
The Sonnet that thou talk'dſt of.

LEICESTER.

Is my Quality
Sunk on a ſudden to ſo low an Ebb,
That I muſt anſwer every Fool's Demand,
Which he may make, becauſe his Humour's teſty?

CLIFFORD.

Then my Demand is fruitleſs, is it not?

LEICESTER.

Ay, and injurious too: Thy Age protects thee:
Elſe on this Side I wear an Advocate,
This faithful Sword, to guard its Maſter's Honour,
And vindicate his Name from foul-mouth'd Slander.

CLIFFORD.

Come, thy Hypocriſy's a thread-bare Cloak:
You've worn it long, my Lord; and now 'tis ſeen through.
If thy Complexion were as black as Hell,
I'd conjure up a Bluſh into thy Cheeks.
Know then I ſent that Scroll.

LEICESTER.

Know then, I care not.

CLIF-

CLIFFORD.

O thou vile Spoiler!
Wherein, or when had I offended thee,
That thou couldſt calmly mean me ſo much Wrong?
Loſt as ſhe is to HENRY's damn'd Inchantments,
My Daughter's not a gen'ral Proſtitute;
Or, ſay ſhe was the Play-thing of Mankind,
My Friend would ſpurn at her, but pity me.

LEICESTER.

Thee, and whatever elſe ſhall dare preſume
To thwart my Pleaſures, I deſpiſe alike.
That I am diſappointed, is moſt true;
Love, and fair ROSAMOND, had fir'd my Hopes:
But for the Venom of thy ſcurrilous Tongue,
It hurts not me; go, rail againſt the Winds:
My Heart is Adamant, and feels it not:
What doſt thou here? Doſt thou diſſemble too?
By my balk'd Joys, thou're Partner in the Trade;
Thou ſhareſt in the Spoil, and ſtandeſt here,
The Pander of thy Daughter's fulſome Luſt.

CLIFFORD.

Hold—Let me wait—for Heav'n itſelf perhaps
Will take my Part, and blaſt thee on the Spot;
Or does it leave me to revenge myſelf?
This truſty Sword, that never yet unmaſk'd,
But in the Field of Honour, ſhall for once
Be ſtain'd in ſingle Fight with Traitor's Blood.

LEICESTER.

Fortune, and ROSAMOND, but ſmile this Hour,
And this ſhall be the Birth-day of my Bliſs.
I draw the Sword of keeneſt Hate: Come on.
[*Fight.* CLIFFORD *falls.*

CLIFFORD.

LEICESTER, the Glory and the Guilt is thine,
That haſt oppos'd thy Wrath to rev'rend Age:
But Life was burdenſome —— and, for this once,
Ev'n Thou art kind —— I pity, and forgive thee.
O Heav'n! ——Hah! who are theſe?

Enter OFFICER *and Guards.*

OFFICER.

My Lord of LEICESTER,
I arreſt thee here, in the King's Name, for Treaſon
In holding Correſpondence with the *Scots*.
Secure him, Guard—What's here?—Lord CLIFFORD fall'n!
O curſed Deed!—How fares it with your Lordſhip?

CLIFFORD.

Well art thou come to catch my parting Breath;
(For I perceive Compaſſion in thy Look).
Bear my laſt Words to gentle SALISBURY:
He ſhall report them, where the Sound ſhall ſtartle,
And, like the Voice of Heav'n, command Attention.
—HENRY was once old CLIFFORD's Royal Friend,
And ROSAMOND was CLIFFORD's only Daughter—
But ROSAMOND and HENRY more than kill'd me;
For, O! this mortal Wound is Titillation
To Honour's painful Stab—Yet witneſs, Friend,
That in this calm, this reconciling Hour,
I ſteep all Paſſion in Forgetfulneſs——
Warn them ſome Angel; ere Heav'n's Wrath be ripe,
To ſeparate their fatal Loves for ever,
That we may meet in Harmony above,
Where Folly, Grief, and Pain, ſhall be no more—
So prays, as for his Soul, the dying CLIFFORD. [*Dies.*

OFFICER.

Heav'n hear thy pious Wiſh, thou good old Man!
—For you, my Lord; but for this laſt black Deed,
That makes ev'n Pity callous, I could grieve,
To bid you be prepar'd to die To-morrow.

LEICESTER.

It had been Cowardice to ruſh on Death,
When Fate had other Miſchiefs in Reſerve;
Elſe my own Hands had freed me from the World,
And HENRY's idle Spleen: But let him know
I dare defy the utmoſt of his Power:
Come Death, come Hell, I will be LEICESTER ſtill.

OFFICER.

Far other Words in this Diſtreſs would better —

LEICESTER.

Away! I was not born to know Diſtreſs;
My Soul, high-tow'ring on her full-fledg'd Wing,
And independent on Contingency,
Hears Fortune's air-ſpent Arrows hiſs beneath her:
Defeated, I ſtill boaſt in my vaſt Purpoſe:
I play'd a dang'rous, but a noble Game:
'Twas Fortitude to venture Life for Glory;
And, next to that, 'tis Fortitude to die.——
I have but one Requeſt to make —— your Leave
To ſee the Prince.

OFFICER.

I have no Orders to refuſe you that.

LEICESTER.

Yet for one Moment my tough Heart muſt bend,
And Nature ſhock'd confeſs a tranſient Pang:
The Dream of Bliſs now ſwims before my Eyes.
Fortune had plac'd my Happineſs in View;
And, when I ruſh'd to graſp the ſolid Joy,
She marr'd my Hopes, and daſh'd them to the Ground.

The Merchant thus the wiſh'd-for Haven ſees,
And chears his Soul with Hopes of future Eaſe:
But, unforeſeen, the threat'ning Tempeſts riſe,
And Clouds black-lowring gather in the Skies;
Winds roar, Seas ſwell, his ſhatter'd Bark is toſt,
And, in a ſudden Wreck, his Maſs of Wealth is loſt.

[*Exeunt.*

The End of the THIRD ACT.

ACT IV.

SCENE I.

Enter QUEEN, *Duke of* CORNWALL, *and Guard.*

CORNWALL.

THIS is the Way, that leads to her Apartment:
Fortune now bids thee triumph o'er thy Rival.

QUEEN.

Alas! I know not how t' inſult Misfortune;
Yet muſt I act a haughty Rival's Part,
Affect the high Diſdain of Majeſty,
The Rage of Jealouſy, and Storm of Vengeance,
Ill-ſuited to my Tenderneſs of Nature:
But ſoft Compaſſion, dreſs'd in Terms of Hate,
Will make more worth the Gift of forfeit Life,
And juſtify my Name to future Times.

CORNWALL.

Theſe ſhall be near to wait th' expected Call.
[*Exeunt.*

ROSAMOND *ſola.*

How dreadful 'tis to commune with one's ſelf!
It is Society, that makes Sin pleaſing:
Lead-pinion'd Slumber weighs upon the Senſe;
But wakeful Conſcience knows no Hour of Reſt,
And the clos'd Eye-lid cannot ſhut out Care.
Why tarries HARRIANA? But ſhe comes.
Hah! I'm betray'd! — The jealous angry Queen,
And with her a grim Crew of Murderers.

Earth,

Earth, open wide thy Boſom to receive me!
Night ſhield me with impenetrable Darkneſs.

Enter QUEEN.

Stand you without, and wait our Word of Fate.
Where is this impious and deluded Woman?
Prepare, prepare, to meet my big Reſentment,
And ſatisfy the Vengeance of my Soul.

ROSAMOND.

Thus ſelf-condemn'd, how ſhall I plead for Pardon?
Or ſtand before offended Majeſty?
Yet Heav'n accepts, in Part of due Atonement,
Confeſſion of the Crime: Here on my Knees ——

QUEEN.

Call'ſt thou it Merit, to confeſs a Crime,
Thou dar'ſt no more deny, than vindicate?
Strive not in vain to deprecate my Wrath:
Think on the Anguiſh of an injur'd Wife;
Think on the Torture of a ſlighted Lover;
Think on the Hatred of a pow'rful Rival;
Think on all theſe; and think on Death.

ROSAMOND.

O, rather,
Think on the Horror of a Wretch, that ſtands
Upon the Brink of Death, but dares not die.
My Soul is ſtartled at the View of Death,
And ev'ry Weakneſs takes the ſad Alarm.

QUEEN.

Art thou afraid to die? I'd have thee ſo:
'Tis Joy to antedate thy Miſery:
To ſuff'ring Virtue Death's a Remedy;
To Guilt, like thine, alone, a Puniſhment.

ROSAMOND.

Great Queen, relent, and ſpare my Bloom of Youth.
Compaſſion on Diſtreſs is great, and noble;
But, undeſerv'd, 'tis godlike: O, remember,
Mercy's the ſhining Attribute of Heav'n;
'Twill ſooth thee in thy laſt ſad Hour to think,
Thou didſt not plunge me into endleſs Ruin:

And

And when thou mounteſt to thy native Sky,
Admiring Angels ſhall come crouding round thee,
And own that thou, of all the Race of Men,
Haſt copy'd beſt thy bright Original.

QUEEN.

Think not to whine me from my firm Reſolve:
Can a Sigh cool the Sun's meridian Blaze?
Or a Tear quench the Rage of ſpreading Flames?
Then may this Shew of artificial Grief,
Of forc'd Remorſe, appeaſe my angry Soul.

ROSAMOND.

'Tis not in Art to mimic Grief like mine:
Let me conjure thee, as thou art a Woman,
By all the natural Softneſs of our Sex,
Not in wild Haſte to dye thy Hands in Blood.
Much have I ſinn'd indeed. If Love's a Sin,
That Sin in every Circumſtance was Love:
Who knows not female Paſſions lordly Rule,
Impatient ever of cool Judgment's Sway?
Diſgrace, Confuſion, Ruin, Rage, and Death,
Are Arguments to Reaſon, not to Love:
A Woman's Weakneſs claims a Woman's Pity.

QUEEN.

A Rival's Joys demand a Rival's Hate:
If female Paſſions ſway with lordly Rule,
Revenge may glow with Fires as hot as Luſt.
Shall I forgive thee, and deſtroy myſelf?
What, let thee live to triumph o'er my Folly,
Again to riot in my HENRY's Arms,
And in each Fit of wanton Dalliance,
To liſp, and prattle o'er, the diſmal Tale;
Then kiſs, and make him ſwear, 'Tis pitiful?
By Heav'n it makes Imagination mad.

ROSAMOND.

Witneſs the Pow'r ſupreme, that ſees my Shame,
I here renounce for ever HENRY's Love;
Tho' Life itſelf would thus be dearly bought:
But I've a fearful Reck'ning yet to make,

Much

Much from my Soul is due to injur'd Heav'n;
Will theſe few Pangs diſcharge the Debt, or will
A Moment's Sorrow pay for Years of Guilt?

QUEEN.

That as Heav'n pleaſes; but my Anger's urgent,
And now demands an inſtant Sacrifice.

ROSAMOND.

Let me but live: Is that ſo great a Boon?
I'll wander in the World a Vagabond,
Turn'd looſe from Human-kind, forlorn, and wild;
Each ſcornful Tongue, that hail'd my happier Days,
Shall mock my abject Fall: I'll owe my Life
To common Charity; from Door to Door
I'll beg Subſiſtence, and be proud to feaſt
Upon the Refuſe of gorg'd Appetite.
And when the Wrath of Heav'n is ſatisfy'd,
And the full Term of all my Woes expires,
On the cold Flint I'll ſtretch my weary'd Limbs,
And bleſs thy Name, and die.

QUEEN.

Shame of thy Sex,
Whom can thy Bleſſings help, or Curſes hurt?
Why do I trifle thus? It is reſolv'd:
Inexorable Juſtice claims her Right.

ROSAMOND.

'Tis Cruelty, not Juſtice, thirſts for Blood.

QUEEN.

Be't which it will, it muſt be ſatisfy'd.

ROSAMOND.

What canſt thou gain by killing me?

QUEEN.

Revenge.

ROSAMOND.

Will *England*'s Queen avow ſo poor a Motive?

QUEEN.

Will *England*'s Queen conform her great Deſigns
To vulgar Rules of Action? Thou ſhalt die.

ROSAMOND.

Then 'tis in vain to ſtruggle with my Fate:
Yes, I will die, and glory in my Love;
For it is conſtant, gen'rous, fixt, and true,
The Will's firm Union, not the Form of Law:
It is my Pride, and I defy thy Malice:
Shall HENRY's Miſtreſs fear a Rival's Rage?
His Love ſhall chear me in my lateſt Moment;
It ſhall deceive thy Cruelty, to mark
With how ſerene a Brow I meet my Death;
And thou ſhalt envy Nature's parting Pang.

QUEEN.

So bold! But we ſhall try this boaſted Courage.

ROSAMOND.

Then be my Blood on thy devoted Head!
My Lord, my HENRY, ſhall revenge my Death:
And when the World ſhall hear our fatal Story,
Thy ſavage Rage, and unrelenting Hate,
Shall brand thy Name with Infamy for ever:
My hapleſs Lot ſhall find a gentler Treatment,
And After-times, indulgent to the Weakneſs,
That preſent Cenſure magnifies with Malice,
Shall rank me high among Heroic Lovers,
That liv'd Love's Votaries, and dy'd its Martyrs.

QUEEN.

In that poor Comfort go, and loſe thy Life.
Advance ye Inſtruments of my juſt Vengeance,
And do the Work of Fate: Bear her to Death.

Enter GUARD.

ROSAMOND.

What do I ſee: it melts my fixt Reſolves:
Courage, and Innocence, would ſhake at this:
What then muſt Guilt, and feeble Woman, feel?
And muſt I fall by Ruffians brutal Hands?
O, yet forgive my Raſhneſs; ſpare my Life;
Spare me at leaſt the Horror of this Sight;

Diſ-

Diſcharge theſe ghaſtly, and grim-featur'd Wretches,
And take my Life with thy own Royal Hand.

QUEEN.

It is beneath me: Hence! Away with her.

ROSAMOND.

Pauſe yet one laſt ſad Moment, and I go:
Since Death is ſure, let me not die like one
That has no Foreſight of a long Hereafter:
Tongue cannot tell the Anguiſh I now feel;
O may it purchaſe my eternal Peace!
Thee, mighty Queen, I above meaſure wrong'd:
Yet this is ſurely Puniſhment enough;
If 'tis too much, Heav'n pardon the Exceſs,
And not impute Severity of Juſtice:
Be thou yet happy in thy HENRY's Love,
And, with my Life, let ev'ry Diſcord ceaſe:
Yet let him wet my Tomb with one ſad Tear,
And pity her his fatal Love has ruin'd:
Then may he quite forget our guilty Joys,
And bleſs the Nations with his Royal Virtues!
Life, Love, and HENRY, all Adieu, for ever.

[*Exit* ROSAMOND *guarded.*

QUEEN.

The painful Taſk is done; and grievous 'twas,
To trace the ſtrong Emotions of her Soul;
This Suff'ring is enough for all her Crimes.
But, lo! the ſilver Gleam of Morning breaks.

O thou ſupreme, all-wiſe, o'er-ruling Pow'r,
That ſeeſt the mighty Wrongs of ELINOR,
Bleſs, if it ſeemeth good, this honeſt Art,
And touch with deep Remorſe my HENRY's Heart:
But if 'tis fix'd, by thy unalter'd Will,
That I ſhould ſtill be ſcorn'd, be wretched ſtill;
If 'tis recorded in the Book of Fate,
That I was born to love, and He to hate;
The next ſad Boon my weary'd Soul ſhall crave,
Is Reſt eternal, and a peaceful Grave. [*Exit.*

SCENE II.

Enter Prince HENRY, *Earls of* SURRY *and* WINCHESTER.

P. HENRY.

It cannot be: The Army all diſpers'd!
And the *Scotch* King himſelf ta'en Priſoner!
This ſtrikes our blaſted Purpoſe to the Root:
Yet do we hold ourſelf as full of Spirit,
And royal Quality, as when we thought
To ſeat us in our Father's tott'ring Throne:
But halt we here, and ceaſe the noble Chace;
Let Glory hide awhile his radiant Head,
Till, burſting, like the Sun from Ocean's Lap,
Once more he pours the Beams of Day around.
Say, where's the Right-hand of our Enterprize,
The truſty LEICESTER?

SURRY.

May it pleaſe your Grace,
By your Command, I went laſt Night t'appriſe
His Lordſhip of our ſudden Overthrow:
But he was then gone forth, 'twas ſaid, in private.

P. HENRY.

Shield him, ye Stars! my ever-faithful Friend,
That nurs'd my Youth, e'en like a tender Plant,
One Day to flouriſh in fair *England*'s Garden.

WINCHESTER.

Look, where he comes; and, lo! a ſullen Guard
Of Officers of State attend upon him;
Death ſits in Pomp upon each Countenance.

Enter LEICESTER *guarded.*

P. HENRY.

Whence is it, LEICESTER, that I ſee thee thus?
I've known the Time when I had flown to meet thee,
Swift as the fabled *Mercury*: Methought

I coul

I could have graſp'd thee to my Heart for ever,
And youthful Love's Embrace was cold to mine:
But now forbidding Horrors dwell around thee;
And this firſt time I wiſh thee from my Sight,
Far as quick Magic, or the Stretch of Thought,
Could waft thee hence: Alas! what mean theſe
Bonds?

LEICESTER.

I am thy Father's Pris'ner; by what Chance,
It matters not: And 'tis with Joy I tell it,
I ſhall not be ſo long; for I'm to die.
This World has trifled with my Expectations,
And I ſhall leave it with Indifference,
Like a diſguſted Friend.

P. HENRY.

Didſt thou ſay, die?
Where is the Pow'r on Earth ſhall take thee from me
Againſt my Will? By Heav'n, my Heat of Soul
Tranſports me to the thund'ring Front of Battle:
Have I no Friends? Methinks ten thouſand Swords
With ſympathetic Rage ſhould leave their Scabbards,
And, forcing Conqueſt from the Hand of Fortune,
Reſcue thy Life, and my inſulted Honour.

LEICESTER.

Why doſt thou ſpend thy frantic Breath in vain?
Thus ruin'd as I am, I pity thee.

P. HENRY.

How ſteady is thy Heart! Bleſt Lot of Virtue!
To her Death ſeems a kind Deliverer,
By whom the Soul long-cumber'd is ſet free,
And quits the Circumſcription of her Priſon
To range the Regions of unbounded Space.
O hadſt thou clos'd thine Eyes in Honour's Bed,
The glorious Fate had claim'd my Gratulation:
But ſhall my Friend be led to ſhameful Death,
To formal, public Execution,
And make a Holy-day for vile Plebeians?
Can I endure all this? — Can I prevent it?

The mournful Image ſinks me into Childhood,
And from my Eyes the deep-fetch'd Sorrow flows.

LEICESTER.

Weep not; for Tears are Woman's Ceremony.
My Life has been a Hurricane throughout,
And I will raiſe a Storm at my Departure;
As the fell Lightning ſtrikes, while it does vaniſh.

P. HENRY.

Thy Talk is wild: Is't poſſible to ſave thee?
I will unhinge the vaſt Machinery
Of Sov'reign Greatneſs, that my Soul had fram'd,
And be that dull, unthinking Thing I was,
Ere yet, inſpir'd by thy awak'ning Breath,
The Flame of Glory play'd about my Heart;
For thee I will renounce this Bauble Crown,
Throw myſelf proſtrate at my Father's Feet,
And there ſolicit for thy valu'd Life.

LEICESTER.

Think not of me; ſolicit for thyſelf:
Aſk Pardon for the Follies of thy Youth,
And promiſe better Carriage for the future:
A little Whining will ſet Matters right,
The old Man kindly takes you by the Hand,
Bids you ſit ſtill, and all ſhall be forgotten.

P. HENRY.

Still, LEICESTER, doſt thou thwart my good Intent,
As if to be oblig'd were worſe than Death?

LEICESTER.

Then hear me, hear me, and be loſt for ever:
Thou poor miſguided Tool, thou Pygmy Monarch,
Thou Froth-made Creature of a Courtier's Guile,
Think not I ever bore Reſpect to thee,
Further than Shew would anſwer my Deſign.
Thou, and thy fanſy'd Title, were the Engines
Of my Ambition, and high-creſted Hopes:
Had Fate done Juſtice to my noble Daring
I'd rioted at Will in lawleſs Pow'r,
And ever-blooming Love —— O ROSAMOND!

My

My Thought ſtill cleaves to thee — But all is paſt,
And the whole World is now not worth my Notice.

P. HENRY.

Tell me, good SURRY, does not this Man rave?
Or am I here, or who, or what are you?
O, 'tis too much, too much!

SURRY.

Accurſed Villain! Hand,
You're much diſturb'd, my Lord: You graſp my
As you'd diſſolve it, and Convulſions rend
Your ſtruggling Heart, like the laſt Gaſps of Nature.

LEICESTER.

Why, ſurely, 'twill be glorious Fun'ral Pomp,
When Princes are the Mourners.

P. HENRY.

It ſhall be ſo — Where is this Son of Darkneſs?
I will defile my Sword with his Heart's Blood,
And drive his Soul back to the Devil his Maſter.

LEICESTER.

Ay, kill me, do; and I ſhall die in Triumph.

P. HENRY.

Hold! Shall I ſave him from the Hand of Juſtice,
And honour his foul Treaſon? — Drag him hence;
Be ſure you grind his Carcaſe into Duſt;
Then ſend each Particle to hotteſt Hell,
To ſuffer ſep'rate Pain —

LEICESTER.

I leave my Imprecations to you all;
I have diſturb'd Mankind, and die content.

[*Exit guarded.*

P. HENRY.

If there's a Torment yet unfelt below,
Thou wilt diſturb the Damn'd — For me what's left
But air-encount'ring Wrath, and ſad Deſpair,
And ſelf-reproaching Shame? — Are you my Friends?
Give me Credentials of your Honeſty;
Smile, cringe, and hug, and ſwear, and then deceive me.

SURRY.

Could I unfold the Bottom of my Heart,
Your Grace would ſee it all your own.

P. HENRY.

Impoſſible!
I tell thee, SURRY, there's no Faith in Nature.
I'd ride a Bulruſh in a ſtormy Sea,
Ere I would truſt a Friend: Ingratitude!
Thou damning Sin of Devils, and of Men!
Our Patriarch-Father, happy in himſelf,
Enjoy'd his ſolitary Paradiſe:
But his firſt Boſom-friend, his Wife, betray'd him.

WINCHESTER.

My Soul abhors the Falſhood of that Traitor:
For me ——

P. HENRY.

Heav'n only knows how much I lov'd him:
He lay within my Boſom's cloſeſt Fold,
And ſaw the Springs that mov'd my Soul to Action:
Had one poor Morſel been my Life's Subſiſtence,
And LEICESTER's craving Appetite unſated,
He ſhould have ſhar'd his precious Moiety
Exact, even to a breath-light Atom's Weight.
Is this the Man that has abus'd me thus?
The brute Beaſt ſoftens to good Offices:
The churliſh Cur friſks at his Maſter's Feet:
Nay, the great Lion fondles with his Keeper,
And bloody Tygers lick the Hand that feeds them:
Man only of all Creatures is ungrateful.
Heav'n too but waſtes its Bounty on the Wretch:
Why ſheds yon golden Orb his daily Light?
Mark! his meridian Brightneſs glares unheeded
By thankleſs Mortals, like a common Meteor.

WINCHESTER.

Forget what's paſt — Awake your wonted Spirit —

P. HENRY.

Never, my Lord. — But, Yeſterday, methought,
Like a full Tide, I ſpread myſelf abroad,

While

While Plenty ſmil'd along my fruitful Shores:
But now Heav'n's ſcorching Wrath has choak'd my Springs;
My ſinking Stream forſakes its thirſty Banks,
And all my Urns are dry — O! I'm undone.

WINCHESTER.

Kind Heav'n ſend Peace to your diſorder'd Soul!

P. HENRY.

Why doſt thou talk of Peace? Orig'nal Chaos
Was more at Peace than I: If thou would'ſt pleaſe me,
Drive me into ſome vaſt Extremity,
Some Precedent of Horror yet unheard-of.
Would I could conjure up a helliſh Spirit,
Should rend aſunder this Sea-mantled Iſle!
Sure I am fit for nought but ſome damn'd Deed,
To chronicle my Name a Plague for ever.

SURRY.

Come, come, my Lord! Youth is a ſportive Tale,
That Men peruſe, and are not critical.
The King will yet forgive, on Terms of Honour,
The Raſhneſs of us all.

P. HENRY.

Curſe his Forgiveneſs!
Was I acquitted to Ten thouſand Worlds,
O! I ſhould damn myſelf: Has HENRY been
The choſen Inſtrument of Knavery,
Still pliant to a Villain's forming Hand?
And am I but a Dupe to ſuch a Wretch?
Impartial Fame, that regiſters all Deeds,
Will write this firſt Page of my Hiſtory,
In Terms moſt vile, and inſignificant:
Had I the nervous Arms of HERCULES,
The ample Sway of PHILIP's conqu'ring Son,
Proud CÆSAR's Fortune, or great ARTHUR's Soul,
HARRY, and Fool, would ſtill be join'd together.
O Shame eternal, inſupportable!

SURRY.

To err is to be mortal: Where is he,
That falls not in the ſlipp'ry Path of Life? But

But future Conduct cancels Failings paſt:
All may be yet retriev'd; the cloud-wrapt Morn
Is oft the Prologue to a glorious Day.

P. HENRY.

Think'ſt thou I bear an ordinary Mind?
Who ſets out wrong, ought to forego his Journey:
Hence I'll divorce me from the faithleſs World,
Step from the Prince, and ſtudy to forget
My Royal Sphere, 'till I am reconcil'd
To low Obſcurity, and abject Life,
And ev'ry Thought be level with my Fate.

SURRY.

Theſe deep Refinements ſeem akin to Madneſs. [*Aſide.*
Your Highneſs ſpeaks the Language of Deſpair.

P. HENRY.

I ſpeak but what I feel: Methinks, 'tis done:
By Heav'n I would not ſtoop to take a Crown;
The Head that wears that ſhining Burden akes for't.
Who rules too, rules o'er Men; and I'd not hold
All Earth upon Security precarious,
As is the Weather-changing Faith of Men:
I hold no farther Correſpondence with them.
Let the vile Miſcreants prey on one another;
While I, on Fortune's miſchievous Caprice,
Will diet my Reflection, and refine
To pure Conception my world-weaned Soul.

How happy is the Sage, in his Retreat,
That human Footſteps never yet profan'd!
No jarring Paſſions vex his gentle Breaſt;
Peace crowns his Days, his Nights unbroken Reſt;
Slave to no Int'reſt, aiming at no End,
He neither fears a Foe, nor wants a Friend;
Careleſs, what Nations riſe, what Empires fall,
He hears not wild Ambition's noiſy Call:
Wiſe to ſhun Pleaſure, Fortune to defy,
He only ſeems to live, that he may die. [*Exeunt.*

The End of the FOURTH ACT.

ACT

ACT V.

SCENE I.

ROSAMOND *aſleep.* *Enter the Earl of* SALISBURY.

SALISBURY.

SEE where ſhe lies aſleep; poor fallen Cherub!
The maiden Freſhneſs of th'ungather'd Roſe
But imitates that Sweetneſs: Fair to look on,
Why art thou all Deformity within?
Oh! how unhappy is the Fate of Beauty?
It tempts the Ruffian Hand of Violence,
And, like the Diamond, ſparkling in the Mine,
With its own Luſtre lights the greedy Spoiler.
O ROSAMOND! had but indulgent Heav'n
Blaſted the early Spring of thy Perfections,
'Tis like, thy Life had been as innocent,
As that ſame guiltleſs Slumber — But ſhe wakes.
I'll ſtand awhile apart.

ROSAMOND.

Have Mercy on me! —
My Fears confound me—This ſad Dwelling ſeems
The Anti-chamber to eternal Darkneſs:
They left me here to dreadful Meditation,
And weary'd Nature ſince has ſunk in Sleep:
Am I to live? Why then that Ceremony,
That diſmal Pomp of Death? Or do they mock me,
Staying the Execution of my Fate,
To fright my Apprehenſion? —Hah! Who's there?
It is my Father's Friend, the good Lord SALISBURY.

SALISBURY.

O ROSAMOND! I come —But I muſt weep firſt —

ROSA-

ROSAMOND.

Weep Blood, my Heart, for ev'ry Tear he ſheds:
Doſt thou behold me with a tender Eye,
Thou that doſt Honour to the Houſe of CLIFFORD,
While I, vile Wretch! was born but to diſgrace it?

SALISBURY.

Believe me, Fair-one, theſe ſame falling Tears
Adorn thee more than Beauty's brighteſt Bloom.
'Twas That betray'd thee to eternal Shame,
And dy'd thy Soul in complicated Guilt;
But Tears ſhall waſh the ſcarlet Stains away.

ROSAMOND.

Thy charitable Care, and mild Addreſs,
Beſpeak my warmeſt Thanks—Say, my good Lord,
Where is my injur'd Father? May I hope
(For once I knew him of a gentle Nature)
He can have Pity on an only Child,
Wretched, and ſad, as Sin and Shame can make her:
For oh! — Deſpair will ſink me, if I die
Beneath the Terrors of his righteous Curſe.

SALISBURY.

There yet remains a diſmal Tale to tell:
Alas! my Friend thy Father is no more;
But Yeſterday he dy'd by LEICESTER's Hand.
In his laſt Moments he remembred Thee
(Think it an Earneſt of forgiving Heav'n):
He own'd his Daughter in that fatal Criſis,
And bleſs'd thee with the Fervency of Pray'r.

ROSAMOND.

This was my Deed: I kill'd this beſt of Fathers;
I drove his hoary Age to Deſperation,
And made his Being painful — So is mine——
For I am now a Burden to myſelf ———
Yet he forgave me — Ponder that, my Soul;
'Tis growing Matter for eternal Thought —
My Lord, thou know'ſt my Doom. Am I to die?

SALISBURY.

You muſt prepare to live: Laſt Night the Queen,

But

But hypocritical in Cruelty,
Beneath the Maſk of Vengeance meant thee Mercy:
That dreadful Guard, that bore thee from the Palace,
As to thy Fate, when they convey'd thee hither,
Fulfill'd their whole Commiſſion: In this Convent
Thou muſt commence the Votary of Heav'n,
And bid Adieu to all the World for ever.

ROSAMOND.

Confeſs, my Heart, the Hand of Providence,
Plain, tho' unſeen, in all its Acts of Mercy:
Here let me firſt, in pious Gratitude,
Implore a Bleſſing on her Royal Head,
Who, tho' my Rival, was not leſs my Friend:
May Peace, and Joy, and Love, crown all her Hours!
And, when her Length of Life is fully ſpun,
Let not Death ſeem a King of Terrors to her;
But, like a ſmiling Angel, ſent to guide
Her fleeting Soul to Realms of endleſs Bliſs!

SALISBURY.

Thy grateful Pray'r is juſt: And now, O think,
Think what a Leſſon thou muſt teach thyſelf:
Canſt thou forget the Luxury of Courts,
The ſoft'ning Joys of Vanity and Eaſe,
And Pleaſure's ſweet Inchantment of the Mind?
Say, canſt thou quench the Fire of youthful Love,
And blot the Name of HENRY from thy Heart?
Canſt thou devote thyſelf to pious Deeds,
To painful, rigid Holineſs of Life;
To Meditation at the Midnight Hour;
To conſtant Watchings, and long Abſtinence,
Religious Toil, that mortifies the Senſe?
This is the Phyſic of a ſickly Soul,
That labours to redeem its forfeit Peace.

ROSAMOND.

O Terms of Life ſevere, yet merciful!
The wholſome Diſcipline of Penitence
Shall reconcile me to offended Grace:
Wilt thou, thou good old Man, ſolicit for me?

Thy pious Intereeſſion well ſhall ſpeed
My tardy Vows, and waft them up to Heav'n.
Hence I give up the World without a Sigh;
The World! What's that? I give up HENRY too:
The Bubble breaks, the painted Scene is clos'd:
And now the calm, and ſadly-pleaſing View
Of peaceful Innocence, and purer Joys,
And Virtue, blaſted like a beaten Flower,
Shocks my Remembrance, and upbraids my Soul.

SALISBURY.

Senſe of paſt Vice is future Virtue's Baſis,
And Self-conviction at the Bar of Conſcience
More awes the waken'd Mind, than the Tribunal
Of ſolemn Juſtice, and the Pomp of Law:
Methinks, I hear the Hoſt celeſtial ſhout,
And praiſe the noble Purpoſe thou haſt made.
Heav'n is not deaf to Sorrow's piercing Voice:
Relenting it beholds the wounded Breaſt,
And kindly ſheds the healing Balm of Mercy.

ROSAMOND.

Thy Words diſtil the honey'd Sweets of Peace:
A Beam of Comfort chears my ſinking Soul,
And brighter Proſpects open to my View:
Folly has ſully'd my Renown of Youth,
But ſtrict Severity of Thought and Action
Shall change the black Complexion of my Guilt
To Snow-white Purity. Ages to come
Shall hear my Tale with Pity, not Reproach;
And thoſe who curſe the ſhameful Name of *Miſtreſs*,
Shall bleſs the Convert, and admire the Saint.

SALISBURY.

If the bleſt Lot of righteous Men above
Admits of Augmentation, it will glad
Thy Father's Spirit, to perceive this Change,
And give a better Reliſh to his Heav'n.

ROSAMOND.

From my Example let the Fair be warn'd,
To ſhun the pleaſing Snares of lawleſs Love,

As

As they would fly the Serpent's bitter Tooth:
Its ſweeteſt Pleaſures leave a Sting behind:
To virtuous Minds Religion's Path is ſmooth;
But ſhe that falls like me, like me muſt tread
The thorny Road of ſad Remorſe and Sorrow.

Hail, gloomy Manſions! hail! Here will I dwell,
In lonely Cloiſters, and a dreary Cell,
A ſad Recluſe, I'll waſte my Youth away,
Steal from Mankind, and ſhun the Face of Day.
[*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.

Enter King HENRY, *and Attendants.*

At length the holy Taſk is full perform'd,
And my freed Soul is clear of BECKET's Murder.
Now we may view our Royal State at Home:
Our Brother SCOTLAND is our Priſoner:
If we think good, we ſeize upon his Crown;
Or bid him reign the Monarch of our Nod.
Let him attend the Sentence of our Will.
For our proud Son; we truſt this late Defeat,
And LEICESTER's Death, ſhall clip his tow'ring Wing;
Of him we ſhall think further at our Leiſure:
For now more tender Thoughts poſſeſs my Soul;
To Love's ſoft Influence all its Motions yield,
And ev'ry Paſſion owns its ſov'reign Maſter.
Queen of my Heart, my ROSAMOND, I come.

Enter the Duke of CORNWALL.

Hah! CORNWALL, why that Terror in thy Look?

CORNWALL.

Pardon, my Liege, the Meſſenger of Fate,
That brings afflicting Tidings to your Ear:

But

But what is done, 'twere Folly to diſguiſe.
Then, to be brief: Laſt Night the jealous QUEEN—

K. HENRY.

Hold, on thy Life! Thou doſt affright Conception:
I could with Patience hear the Knell of Death,
But not thy horrid Tale: Yet let me know it —
Proceed, and tell me nought but Truth, thou Wretch!
But dare not tell me, ROSAMOND is dead.

CORNWALL.

See where ſhe comes herſelf. I ſtand diſcharg'd
Of my ungrateful Office.

Enter QUEEN.

K. HENRY.

Can it be?
With how compos'd a Brow ſhe hides her Guilt!
Dove-like Appearance, with a Serpent's Heart!
May I not hope a Woman will ſpeak Truth
To do a Miſchief? Therefore tell me, ELINOR,
Without the forc'd Evaſion of a Lye,
Where is my Love, my Life, my ROSAMOND?

QUEEN.

Would all King HENRY's Foes were ſafe as ſhe!
Poor Wretch! ſhe's faſt aſleep.

K. HENRY.

What! doſt thou mock me?
Doſt thou with Triumph own thy Cruelty?
My vaſt Revenge ſhall tear thee —Soft, my Soul —
This Rage becomes me not—Fly hence, thou Tygreſs,
Leſt I forget, in Wrath, myſelf, and thee,
And ſtain my Hands ignobly with thy Blood.

QUEEN.

Thy Menaces, great Monarch, fright me not.
What I have done, was but the Deed of Juſtice.
Didſt thou believe me then ſo tame of Soul,
That I could bear my Injuries for ever?
Yet, HENRY, in my utmoſt Pride of Heart,
Let me confeſs my tender Love for thee:

Caſt

Caſt out that hated Wanton from thy Thoughts,
And I can yet forgive thee all my Wrongs.

K. HENRY.

'Tis well! Thank Heav'n, in full Contempt I hear thee.
But, O, Philoſophy's no Cure for Love;
This only Way Fate could unman my Soul:
O ROSAMOND, for ever, ever loſt!
My Love was ſweeter than the op'ning Flow'r,
That trembles with the Morning ſilver's Dew:
Fair, as the Down of Swans, or Mountain's Snow;
Then ſhe was faithful as the Turtle's Mate,
And harmleſs as the Smile of Infancy.
Why was I born a Ruler of the World,
Firſt Potentate on Earth, and Lord of Nations;
Yet could not keep one Jewel worth them all?
O ROSAMOND, for ever, ever loſt!

QUEEN.

Triumphant, happy Rival, ev'n in Death!
Does then a a Harlot's Fate deſerve thoſe Tears?
Had the cold Tomb receiv'd me to my Reſt,
It had not coſt thy barb'rous Heart a Sigh;
Thou wouldſt have bleſs'd the lucky Deſtiny,
That took away the nauſeous Inconvenience.

K. HENRY.

Time was I did revere thy boaſted Virtue.
Now thou haſt done a Deed that ſtartles Nature.
And wouldſt thou ſtill profeſs thy Love for me?
Can Hell produce Hypocriſy like thine?
Would ſhe, that loves me, ſtab me to the Heart?
Couldſt thou have form'd one tender gen'rous Thought,
Thou hadſt in Pity ſpar'd my Soul's firſt Darling;
Thy Mercy had well prov'd thy Love unfeign'd,
And won my Praiſe, and Fame's fair Palm for ever.
But now, away! — Thou doſt delight in Blood.

QUEEN.

Could I have hop'd, my Lord, by gentle Means —

K. HENRY.

Silence, falſe Woman! Thou didſt know full well,
The Temper of my Soul, by Nature, noble;
And now, ev'n now, I mean to prove itſo:
'Twas thine to gratify a mean Revenge,
The King, and Huſband, ſcorns to ſtoop ſo low:
Go hence, and let thy Puniſhment be Life.
What have I done? Alas! my ROSAMOND,
Didſt thou not call upon thy HENRY's Name?
Didſt thou not wiſh me to avenge thy Death?
Oh, no; thy tender Nature did forgive
The Stroke of Cruelty, and dy'd in Smiles.

QUEEN.

I can no more.
Joy to thy Heart! thy ROSAMOND yet lives.

K. HENRY.

Hah! did I hear? Was it an Angel's Voice?
Speak it, O ſpeak again, ye Heav'ns, in Thunder!

QUEEN.

I told my Lord, that ROSAMOND yet lives.

K. HENRY.

Where is ſhe? Let me fly into her Arms,
That I may tell my Heart's full Tranſport there:
Loſt Crowns recover'd, ſprightly Health reſtor'd
To Nature ſunk, were Bleſſings poor to this:
Who ſav'd her precious Life? He's my beſt Friend,
And let him take a Kingdom for his Service.

QUEEN.

That Friend was I.

K. HENRY.

What can thy Malice mean?
Fortune acts underhand, and fools my Soul:
Whom ſhall I hear, or what ſhall I believe? [WALL,
Can none reſolve my Doubts? My Lord of CORN-
As thou know'ſt ought has chanc'd, I charge thee
ſpeak.

CORNWALL.

My Liege, the QUEEN has utter'd but the Truth

K. HEN-

K. HENRY.

O ye immortal Pow'rs! how can this be?

QUEEN.

That I've this Day abus'd your Royal Ear,
Thus humbly on my Knee I aſk Forgiveneſs:
'Tis the firſt Time I ever yet deceiv'd you.
Let Actions ſpeak for me; hear, and believe
How I have lov'd thee, how I love thee ſtill!
Fortune, laſt Night, gave me ſure means of Vengeance,
But, great as thine, my Soul diſdain'd them all.
She lives, my Rival lives, tho' not for thee;
Happy, tho' thou ſhalt charm her Eyes no more;
A Convent's ſacred Walls ſecure the Fair,
Where Heav'n (I truſt) ſhall with free Grace accept
The pious Tribute of her future Duty.

K. HENRY.

If this be true —— and ſure I feel it is,
I muſt not, dare not, think how I have wrong'd thee;
Earth does not bear ſo black a Wretch as me.
What haſt thou done? Thou haſt been wond'rous good;
Yet cruel to Exceſs — See her no more?
Shine then no longer, Sun — What! not to part?
Not one kind Word, one Kiſs, one laſt Embrace!
O mournful, ſad, eternal Baniſhment!
Baniſh'd? From whence? From a wild World of Folly,
To Virtue's calm Abode; baniſh'd to Heav'n.
And am I griev'd at this, becauſe I lov'd her?
O ſudden, painful Teſt of Senſe and Honour!
Strong is the Voice of Reaſon, and of Virtue;
But Love pleads too, and Nature will be heard.

QUEEN.

I did not this with any mean Deſign:
Virtue ſeeks not Advantage from her Deeds:
Therefore I ſay not this deſerves your Kindneſs:
The cool Reſpect of Gratitude I ſcorn;
My Love for thee was ever from the Heart,
And equal Love alone can make me happy:
Elſe, tho' undone, I have diſcharg'd my Duty.

K. HENRY.

I pr'ythee, pr'ythee, leave me, ELINOR ——
Yet ſtay — By Heav'ns, again ſhe holds me faſt,
The lovely Image clings about my Soul!
Hence, dear Illuſion, pleaſing Phantom, vaniſh! —
'Tis done — Methinks, yon golden Cloud deſcends;
And, lo! a heav'nly Form, that calls my Love!
And now they glide acroſs th' ethereal Plain:
Am I then left behind? For what, juſt Heav'n?
Do I not know for what?
'Tis mad to pauſe, and madder to reſolve:
O that for one kind Minute Thought could ſtagnate!

QUEEN.

Aſſiſt his ſtruggling Soul, all-gracious Heav'n!

CORNWALL.

So pleaſe your Majeſty, the Prince approaches.

Enter Prince HENRY, WINCHESTER, *and* SURRY.

K. HENRY.

A Stranger come to Court—Well, my young Hero,
What, are your conqu'ring Forces up in Arms?
Or doſt thou kindly offer Terms of Peace?

P. HENRY.

Oh, Sir, 'tis paſt — Here, at your Royal Feet,
Behold this Rebel Son, a Penitent.
My haughty Soul, that erſt climb'd Heaven high,
Is but a Reptile now —— Ambition ſhrinks,
Ev'n like an empty Vapour vaniſhing,
Whoſe Place is ſeen no more — I only aſk
Pardon, and Peace, for me, and theſe my Friends.

QUEEN.

Unhop'd for Change! — O let the King grant both.
Thou art my Son again.

K. HENRY.

What may this mean?
HARRY, I lov'd thee once.

P. HENRY.

And if you lov'd,

May

May I preſume to hope you will forgive too?
Sir, I once flouriſh'd in your Royal Smile:
Early my Soul began to pant for Glory:
But as the Seeds of Honour grew within me,
An artful Villain tamper'd with the Soil,
And ſpoil'd a goodly Crop — The reſt you know —
Fortune, unequal to my daring Cauſe,
Has open'd ſince my Eyes: I wak'd indeed;
But only wak'd to ſee my Shame and Sorrow.

K. HENRY.

Can I have Faith in this? Thou haſt deceiv'd me.

P. HENRY.

'Twas in the fatal Day of youthful Folly:
But now the Purpoſe of Deceit is over;
For I am going henee, to that high Court,
Where Cunning cannot ſcreen, or Darkneſs hide.

QUEEN.

Alas! my Fears! What didſt thou ſay, my Son?

P. HENRY.

Let me not waſte my moſt important Moments.
I have this Morning drank a deadly Draught.
I feel all-conqu'ring Death advancing on me;
He lays cloſe Siege: My ſinking Spirits fail;
My Nerves are ſlacken'd all; my Blood runs cold,
And Nature's Out-works yield; tho' ſtill my Heart,
Like a ſtrong Citadel, reſiſts the Storm.

QUEEN.

Is there no Help? O fatal, woful Deed!

P. HENRY.

Why weeps my gentle Mother? What I did,
Was in the Frenzy of extreme Deſpair;
And Madneſs, if my Hopes have not been flatter'd,
Bars not the Gate of everlaſting Mercy.
Reaſon has ſince reſum'd her proper Seat,
And all is calm within — Yet would I take
A Father's Bleſſing with me to the Grave.

K. HENRY.

May Heav'n forgive thy hapleſs Youth, as I do!

P. HENRY.

Then welcome Death! — And, if in this laſt Hour,
I have found Grace, O let me recommend
The QUEEN, my injur'd Mother, to your Love:
She never bore a Thought againſt your Highneſs.
Behold! ſhe faints — Support her, righteous Pow'rs!
For ſhe deſerves your Care — Now, Farewel both —
Let not the buſy World be prattling of me ——
But write upon my Stone — "Here lies a Prince,
"That, once miſled, could not ſuſtain the Shame." —
'Tis dark —— O Mercy! —— [*Dies.*

K. HENRY.

Honour, more than Grief,
Is due to Death like this, which has abſolv'd,
By ending mortal Frailty: Mourns the QUEEN
So bitterly for him, whoſe haſty Spirit,
Aſpers'd her ſpotleſs Name?

QUEEN.

That Name's now clear;
And he that did aſperſe it, was my Son.
He was my Son indeed —— O there's the Sting!
And is it thus that we are reconcil'd?
Is Death alone the Peace-maker between us?
Why then I'll follow thee —— Farewel, my Lord;
For, now, this Life has no Temptation left;
Yet, ev'n in Death, my Faith ſhall be approv'd,
And my laſt Breath ſhall be a Pray'r for thee.
It was the Study of my Life to pleaſe thee:
That fail'd, and I have now no farther Care.
That I ne'er meant thee Evil, ev'n in Thought,
By Proof too fatal Providence has ſhewn:
And to die juſtify'd is ſtill my Glory.

K. HENRY.

O, hold, talk not of Death; for I, alone,
Am fit for Ruin —— O, my ELINOR,
I tremble at the Thought of what I am!
Canſt thou forgive me from thy very Heart?

QUEEN.

QUEEN.

Can HENRY, from his Heart, deſire Forgiveneſs?

K. HENRY.

I can, I muſt, I do. The Conflict's over:
I am thy wondrous Virtue's Proſelyte.
Receive me in thy Arms, thou Excellence,
Thou Glory of thy Sex — Here will I hide
My guilty Head, till thy kind Smile ſhall raiſe me;
For Shame, and Joy, and Love, ſo work within me,
That I can only ſpeak them thus and thus ———

QUEEN.

O let my Language too, my Lord, be this.

K. HENRY.

Bear hence the Body; for it grieves our Sight.
Curſt that I was to wrong ſuch Innocence!
'Twill be my Shame for ever ——

QUEEN.

It is paſt:
A Moment's Love has made Amends for all;
And I forget, that ever you was falſe.

K. HENRY.

When I prove ſo again — 'Tis Sin to think on't.
From this auſpicious Day my Soul ſhall labour
To heal thy Sorrows, to redeem loſt Time,
And pay thee all my vaſt Arrears of Love.

QUEEN.

Thanks to all-bounteous Heav'n!

K. HENRY.

And thy own Virtue!

Enter SALISBURY.

Welcome, Lord SALISBURY! Where's the good old
CLIFFORD?
It is beneath a King to do Injuſtice;
But it is more beneath him to defend it.
Will he forgive my Baſeneſs? For, methinks,
All is not right, till he is reconcil'd.

SALIS-

SALISBURY.

That's ſpoke indeed like great PLANTAGENET:
I read Content in ev'ry chearful Face,
And I am griev'd to ſpoil the gen'ral Joy:
My Liege, poor CLIFFORD lies a breathleſs Coarſe,
By LEICESTER ſlain—But, dying, he forgave you—
It ever was his Wiſh to ſee this Day.

K. HENRY.

By holy Friendſhip thou haſt touch'd my Soul.
It was but Yeſterday I ſaw him well:
His keen Device did gall me to the Heart.
CLIFFORD, accept theſe Tears; for Tears are all
The Monarch, or the Friend, can give thee now.
We will do Honour to his Memory,
And ſhow'r our Royal Bounty on his Houſe:
O SAL'SBURY, let me take thee to my Heart,
Dear as thy Kinſman was.

SALISBURY.

I thank your Highneſs.

K. HENRY.

From this Day's Fortune, let crown'd Heads be wiſe:
Kings are not privileg'd to do a Wrong.

The Laws divine bear univerſal Sway;
Princes are Men, and Men muſt all obey.
Virtue's the Gem, that decks the Royal State;
And only, to be Good, is to be Great.

[*Exeunt omnes.*

THE END.